





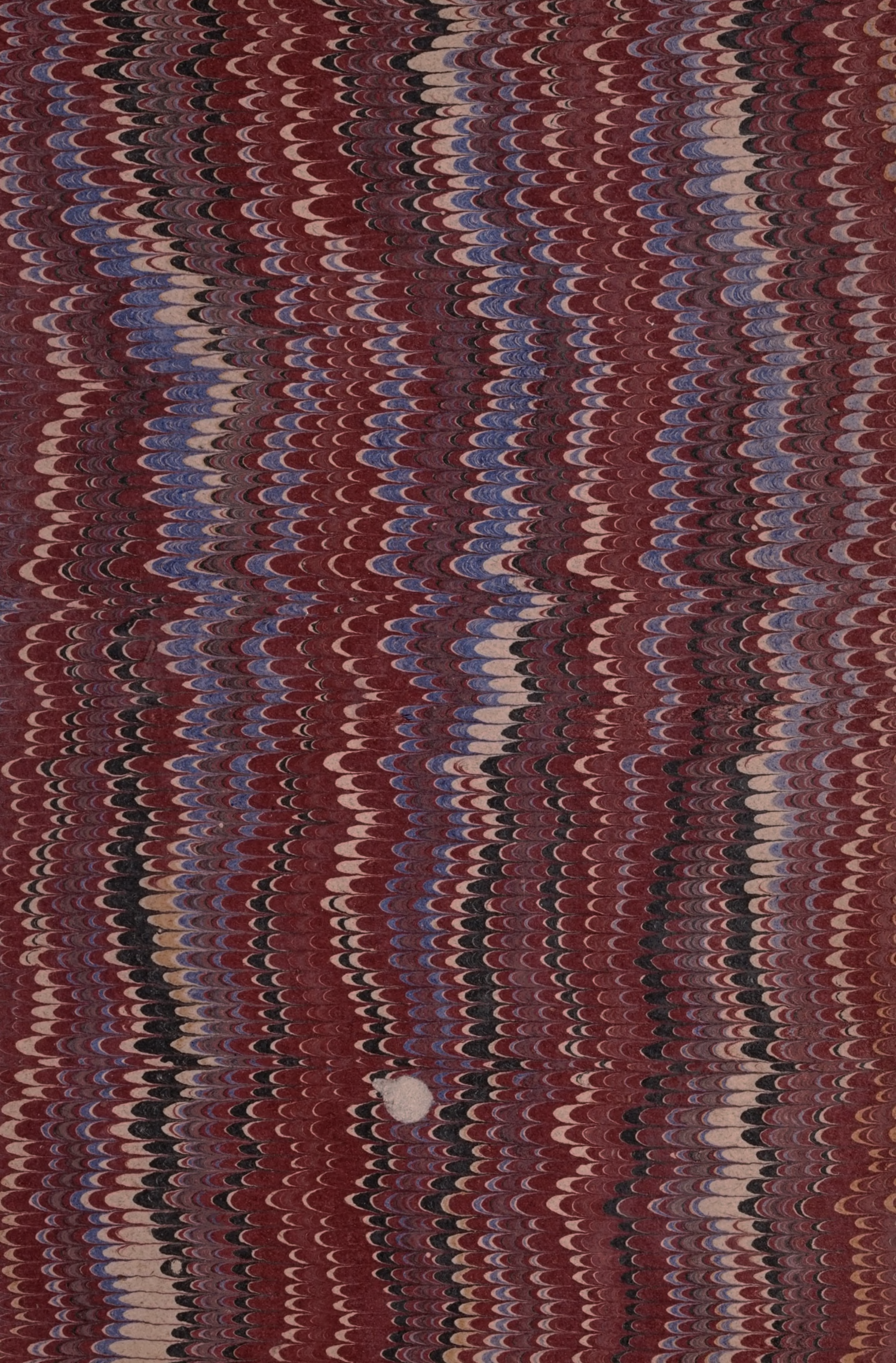
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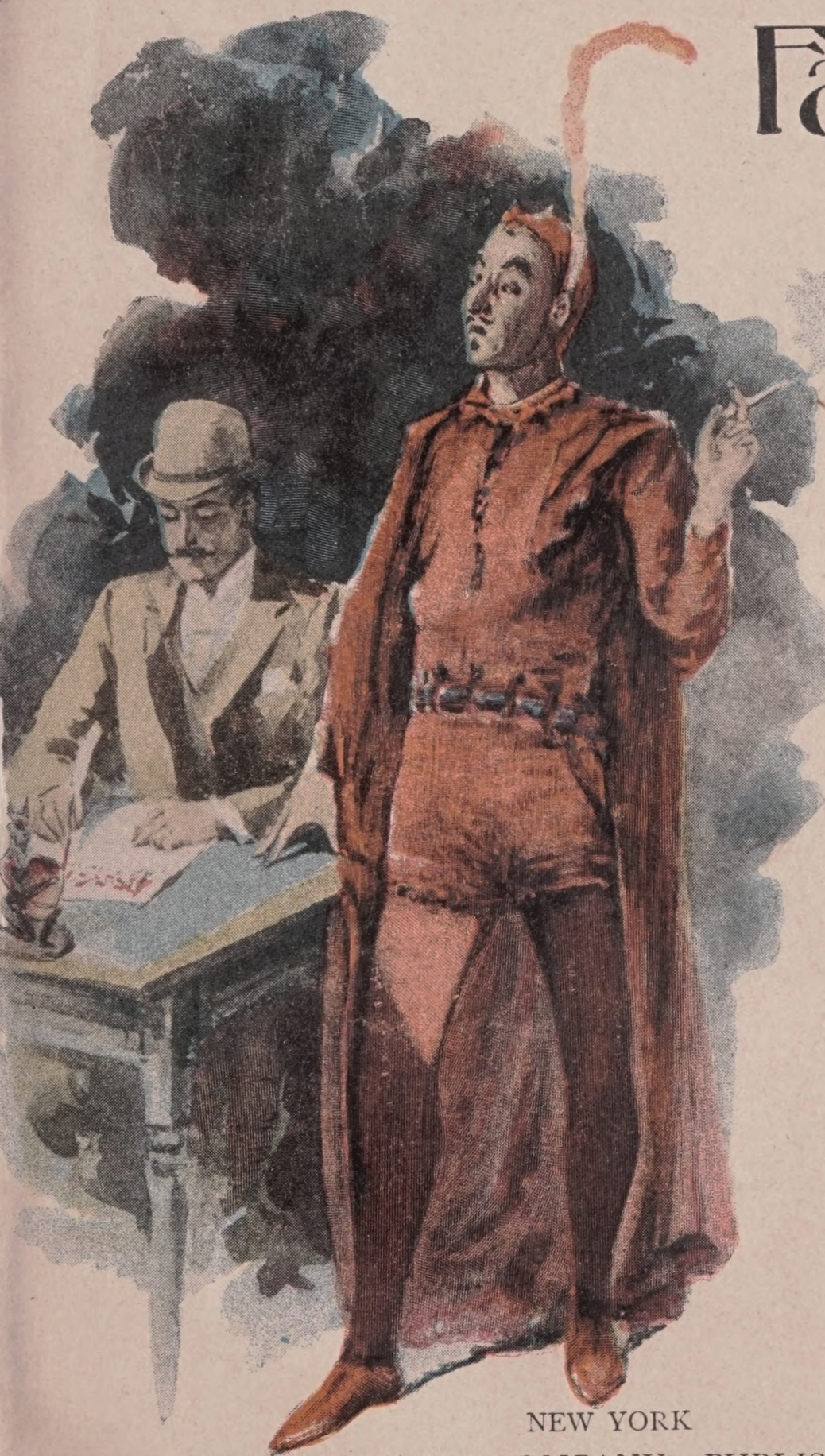








# The American Faust.



Illustrations by  
EKSEKIAN.



NEW YORK  
BELFORD COMPANY, PUBLISHERS

18-22 EAST 18TH STREET

[Publishers of *Belford's Magazine*]







THE AMERICAN FAUST

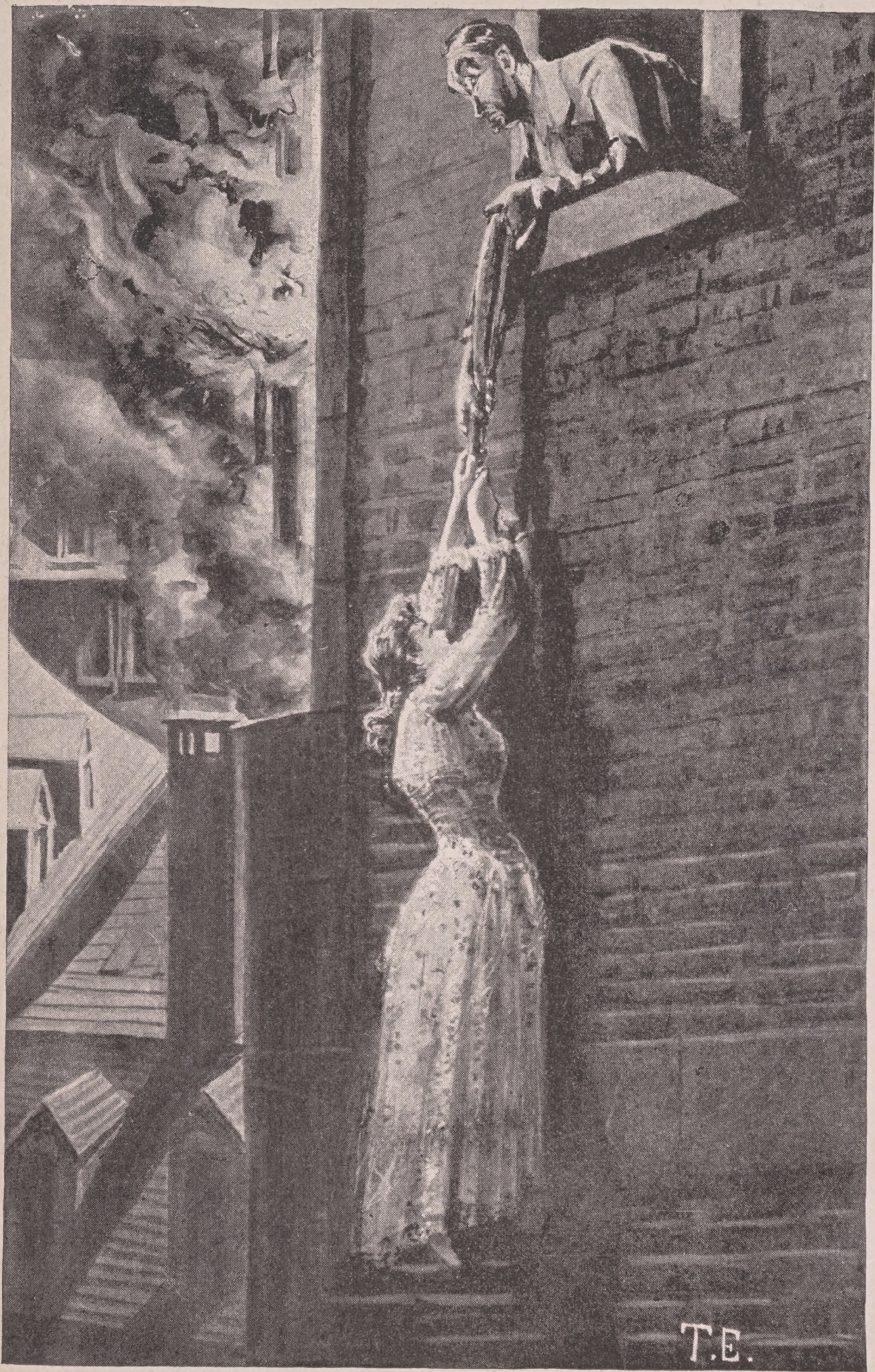










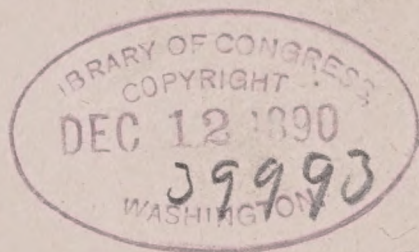




# THE AMERICAN FAUST

BY

EDWARD A. PAULTON



NEW YORK  
BELFORD COMPANY, PUBLISHERS  
18-22 EAST 18TH STREET  
[Publishers of *Belford's Magazine*.]

(1890)



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## PREFACE.

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THE facts herein related gain in importance from the unique position held by one of the chief participants; and the gentleman I refer to must be my excuse for throwing this history into the market. To very few of us is it given to have intimate intercourse and daily companionship with beings of the other world; therefore must I be forgiven any boastful feelings which my friendship with the spiritual powers may breed within me.

Sadler A. Tann, who, unless you have deferred the reading of the preface until you have perused the book, is as yet unknown to you, was, as far as my judgment goes, a most estimable gentleman and a worthy fellow in every way. His unvarying good-humor and honest simplicity made him a favorite with all of us; and as the reader will observe, the few contemptible actions he attempted were in direct opposition to his chivalrous nature, and actuated solely by a sense of duty; which, let the duty be ever so ignoble, is a decidedly commendable sentiment.

Mr. Elliott, whose real name I withhold, is known to very many in this city; but scarcely one in fifty of his numerous friends is aware of this, the most eventful episode in his career. Jack Harper and myself were the sole depositories of the secret; but



nearly a decade having passed since our immortal friend returned to his own element, we, thinking the story too good to be lost, determined to make it public, and it now appears under the title of "The American Faust." Harper, whose connection with all the principals of the narrative was direct, has provided the matter, and I have endeavored to preserve the interest which he contrived to put into his relation.

Probably the secret of Mr. Elliott's identity will now be revealed to Miss Harper, and possibly to Mrs. Elliott. This fear does not daunt us, however, for Mr. and Mrs. E. are too devoted to each other to allow the memory of a departed demon to come between them.

EDWARD A. PAULTON.

NEW YORK.



# THE AMERICAN FAUST.

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## CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH HISTORY AVAILS ITSELF OF A TIME-HONORED  
CUSTOM, AND REPEATS ITSELF.

IN the spring of 188—, a party of American tourists were making the rounds of the sights of the Old World—merely for the say-so, their spirits being of too business-like a nature for reverence, or to stay the unthinking scoff or the shallow joke, older than the curiosity which called it into being. The party were at Nuremberg. What had brought them to that dingy spot? Who can say? A fatalist, before finishing this story, will conclude—destiny! He is welcome to his opinion.

People who have visited the quaint old town of Nuremberg may, if they be of a literary bent, feel equal to the task of describing its picturesqueness. Many whose knowledge of that city's antiquity is confined to hearsay, or whose eyes have but admired its oddity in pictorial representations, would naturally feel disinclined to risk the thunders of criticism by venturing on a minute description. Many—not all! There are some who fear nothing; one of these is the author of the following strictly truthful narrative.

Nuremberg is the direct opposite, adjectively speaking, to the phonetic rendering given to the first syllable of its name. The streets are narrow, affording more shelter than exposure; being more shady in summer and less inclement in winter than broader



thoroughfares. The first floors of the houses, in all probability, jut out some feet over the sidewalk; thence the dwellings rise in latticed perpendicularity to red-tiled roofs, with large projecting eaves. On the lower side of these eaves, if we are to believe what we are told, there are innumerable birds'-nests, the abode of swallows or storks, it is difficult to say which without a book of reference. Where one street is intersected by another, there are corners, at which the houses are probably cylindrically built, like tall towers, dotted with long slits of windows, the roofs in these instances resembling in shape extinguishers, sugar-loaves, and many other conically formed articles.

Viewed from the walls on the north side, Nuremberg is at its best. The shining river twines in and out through the spreading panorama of dwellings. From the red roofs rise innumerable wreaths of pale-blue smoke, which at a slight elevation meet and hang over the city in a semi-transparent cloud. For the sake of heightening the effect, we imagine the old town in the warm glow of the setting sun; not the fiery crimson, lighting the window-panes with living fire, but the rich amber, which like a stray fragment of the glory of the Eternal, floods the western sky with radiant happiness. The tall spires, with their darkened sides turned towards the spectator, stand out against the lucent background clearly and boldly; one after another their deep-toned chimes proclaim the seventh hour, and the molten sun sinks to slumber below the distant tree-tops. The fading glory struggles meekly against the deep azure of night; for a brief interval the amber shafts quiver low in the western sky, and then the saddening twilight falls. The far-off river flows now a deep purple; the roofs, gray with shadow, and the spires merge their outlines into the prevailing gloom. Night opens wide her star-gemmed mantle and throws it over heaven's entirety, covering with darkness the silent town, hiding



the river from the gazer's sight, and blending into a confused mass the roofs and spires. If the traveller be not afraid of the night air, he may stay and watch the twinkling of the lights in the streets and in the various windows from basement to garret, and philosophize thereon.

That faint light, scarce strong enough to avail against the deep-colored blind, may shed its dismal rays on the bended head of some poor student whose soul rises superior to the lack of means; whose mind, in the pursuit of learning, heeds not the fatigue of body which prematurely ages the heart and furrows the brow. That nearer brightness in a lower room—what kind of emotion does it witness? A soft-eyed girl seated with *his* love tokens in her hand. Looking at them? No! yet, by their touch, aiding her memory to form his image to her mind, to recall each sweet, endearing word her Fritz had uttered but an hour ago. Could he but see her now in her thoughtfulness!—see her eyes dim with the love which overflows her heart for him! And where is he?

There is a jovial, inviting light in yonder basement.

Were the philosopher nearer, he could hear the shouts of revellers and the clatter of skittles. Fritz not unlikely is there, swilling himself into a habit which will in time grow to the second nature of intoxication. His thoughts are not with her; he listens to the coarse jests and ribald oaths of the boon-companions, who are dragging his nature down to their level of degradation, and the fair, blue-eyed *fräulein* is forgotten. The light in her window is extinguished. She has prayed for her unworthy Fritz, and is now sleeping with his name still hovering on her lips. Oh, philosopher! cease your reflections. They are too sad. Could you not have chosen the joyous side of life? Why not have pictured Fritz making himself useful at home, reading to his mother or singing to his sisters, and occasionally thinking, with a great heart-longing, of the blue-eyed maiden?



You philosophers find too much pleasure in taking life at its worst. You make others, who profess to recognize the truth of your lamentations, miserable.

If learning and continued thought have strengthened your minds into motors for the multitude, exercise your sophistries, your wisdom, in a cheerful direction, and like powerful reflectors, seize what little light there is in life and emphasize it, directing your borrowed brilliancy into the darksome corners and gloomy niches of existence.

The devil is not so black as he is painted. Which proverbial reflection brings us back to the object of this history.

Franklin Elliott was an important unit in a touring-party which, in "doing" (I believe that is the technical term) the sights and curiosities of the Old World, had, without design or premeditation, happened upon that relic of mediævalism and stand-by of Hans Andersen, Nuremberg. The reader is already convinced that the writer is totally ignorant of his subject, so, with a simple bow to his undoubted perspicacity, we proceed to strengthen the conviction. Mr. Elliott's companions were for the most part about his own age; they were the sons and heirs of railroad potentates, Wall-Street brokers, and other questionable characters, and it follows as a logical inference that their sinews of war were superior to lassitude or fatigue. Franklin's parents, however, were in a poor way of business, having been defunct for many years; for which reason Franklin was an orphan. His circumstances were reduced, principally through his own fault, the reduction following upon evenings at poker and afternoons at horse-racing; but he was such good company, he was so amusing at all times in the unconsciousness of dry wit, that "the boys" felt lost without him.

He was a guest on this trip; yet he labored under no sentiment about receiving obligation; he tended rather to the belief that he was the conferrer. The



rich were born to pay, and it is the duty of the poor not to interfere with their mission. In short, Franklin Elliott was the spinal column of the party; his withdrawal from the main body would mean nothing less than utter collapse. Who took the lead in every escapade? Who was it that brought down upon their little party the vengeance of a beer-garden full of riotous German students? Who was it winked at the girl till she was compelled to laugh, to the jealous annoyance of her escort? Who was it that with gentle raillery goaded the lover on to assault and battery? They all suffered alike in the struggle for amusement and liberty; but the *casus belli* was Franklin. Yet he never talked or boasted of his achievements; no one would have supposed him to have been the master-mind of the party; but he was. The others proposed and he disposed, almost with a look.

It is necessary to give the reader a good insight into Mr. Elliott's character, to enable him to realize the following chapters.

Everything afforded Franklin subject for jest; his tongue was ever ready, and not one of his confederates—an expression which we hope will not hand him down to futurity as a conjurer—dared risk his sarcasms and witticisms.

Franklin, in addition to an inexhaustible fund of animal spirits, was fairly good-looking, without being conceited; he being the author of an aphorism: "Plenty beauty, scanty brain;" which saying, as a rule, depended for proof on the existence of exceptions.

He could do more in a minute by a little specious lingual persuasion than any of the others, with all their looks, in half an hour.

Franklin, to sum him up, was the very personification of agreeable impudence.

He was impudent to all, young and old, male and female.

This very impertinence was so natural, so appar-



ently the outcome of an innocent, fearless nature, that people liked it.

He called every middle-aged lady "Mother," and every young girl "Sis." His German was execrably bad, but he paraded it on all occasions, and, by leading the laugh at his own mistakes, brought hearers to believe that he knew more than it pleased him to disclose.

The sun was setting in the west, according to custom, and as before stated. The New Yorkers stood outside the hostelry which was their temporary home, and discussed plans and estimates, gratuitously tendered, with a view to shortening the evening. Like most other things, not made to order, it did not fit them. It was seven o'clock, and the hours seemed likely to hang heavy till bedtime, which in these quiet regions was nearly half a day earlier than in New York. On that side two was the earliest, here ten was the latest; a distinct gain of four to Nuremberg, which, allowing for the meridional difference, about five, gave the latter nine hours the advantage. A large majority of the few interested in time-killing were in favor of seeking a beer-garden; Franklin, for a wonder, was the sole dissentient; he was thoughtful, he said, would smoke a cigar, and join them later in the hotel. After some attempts to move his resolution, they left him. Franklin lighted his cigar, and sauntered idly along the narrow, half-dark streets. After wandering about aimlessly for a few minutes, he threw his cigar away, and began to whistle an air from "Faust."

From what trifles spring important issues! Had he whistled "Sweet Violet" or any other melody, this history would never have been written!

Franklin stopped in the middle of the air he had on his lips and thought: "By George! this is the town in which old Faust was supposed to have lived. I believe they show his studio yet. I'll take it in."

A man of execution is better than one of resolu-



tion: Franklin however, improved on either by being a combination of both. In considerably more time than it takes to write it, he had found Faustus' lodging. He enquired in his best Bowery German accent, if the chamber was open to the inspection of the public. The old janitor said "*Nein*", he was closing up for the night; no more visitors and several other sentences in Deutschland vernacular. Mr. Elliott was not surprised; he had half expected the information, and the coin which unlocked the old nail-studded doors was ready in his hand, equal to any emergencies of the sort.

"This," lectured the old man, as he ushered Franklin Elliott into the dingy chamber, "is where the celebrated Dr. Faustus worked for years to discover the philosopher's stone."

"What philosopher's stone?" asked Franklin; but the old man was deaf.

"Here he sat night after night by the dim light of a taper," continued the old man, in his own soft, guttural Wagnerian dialect, "working out most awesome problems."

"Conic sections, probably," remarked Franklin.

"It finally affected his brain," maundered the dodderer, "and he made the horrible compact with the devil, of which you have heard!"

"No, never!" said Mr. Elliott. "What was it?"

The old usher, with a look of supreme pity in his eyes, explained to Mr. Elliott that the Evil One had presented Herr Faust with the gift of youth in exchange for his immortal soul.

"Horrible!" gasped Franklin. "Can such things happen in this nineteenth century?"

"Yes," answered the old man, "we all believe it, here."

Franklin did not believe it, but he had his mind fixed on an adventure; he would be locked in the room all night, and, after causing his friends considerable anxiety, appear to give them the laugh in the morning.



He was probably wrong on the considerable anxiety question ; his friends were not of a nature to worry about anything more than themselves. The old guide shifted along to a window in one corner of the room, desirous of showing his visitor a comprehensive bird's-eye view of the town and river. This was Franklin's chance. An antique wardrobe was standing at the side of the room which was most enveloped in the growing darkness ; into this Mr. Elliott stepped when the old man's back was turned. The heavy door closed with a loud bang, and the guide turned round as sharply as his years permitted to look after the visitor. He was gone.

The decrepit janitor then hobbled to the door of the chamber, imagining that to have been the one slammed, and peered down the dingy staircase, expecting to see the figure of the departing traveller.

He was disappointed. However, he had received his reward in advance ; so muttering something to the effect that he was not so lively on his legs as formerly, he left the apartment to darkness and Franklin. Franklin stepped out of the wardrobe and examined his surroundings. The chamber was dark enough when the sun streamed in ; that old oak wainscoting is so gloomy, and that carpetless floor, stained a deep brown with dirt and years, is so unsympathetic. There was an old bookcase in one corner. Two or three high-backed, uncomfortable chairs, with odd carvings on the legs and arms, stood around, in dismal keeping with the surroundings. A small, heavy, solidly unhappy-looking table occupied the centre of the apartment, the abject picture of misery. There were moth-eaten strips of tapestry around the rickety windows, which would rob the very daylight of cheerfulness—and it was night. Franklin struck a match and searched the room over for a lamp or candle. The friendly gas bracket was not there ! neither lamp nor candle ! The match slowly burned away to



his finger-tips, and he dropped it with an easy, everyday, passionless "Damn!"

Franklin was not depressed. He had been thoughtful on his way, but that feeling had long since worn off.

He drew one of the high-backed chairs close to the table, and with the assistance of a cigar sat himself down to think.

Everything favored contemplation, for everything was quiet. No ticking of clock to irritate the nerves; no objects visible to distract the mind; nothing but the faint light from the street below flickering through the dust-covered panes of the window. The silence was profound, until the ear, growing accustomed to the monotony, became keen enough to distinguish the distant patter of feet and rumbling of wheels in the quiet streets below. What more natural than that Franklin's thoughts should revert to the old legends, whose mystic web shrouded the few modern improvements which had been introduced into the ancient chamber. Elliott pictured to himself the hoary-headed student, seated at the table, just as he then was; he mentally placed himself in Faust's situation—an old man whose life was bereft of all brightness, who saw himself on the verge of an unsympathetic grave, with none to mourn his loss, none to extol the few virtues he possessed, and no one to gloss over his faults with the varnish of filial affection. "It was hard for him to die," thought Franklin; "the old bookworm must have had a pretty tough time of it, and maybe he had never known what it was to have a boy's heart and to experience the fascinations of youth. Most likely he had soured his young days by a toilsome application better adapted to maturity. Yes," said Elliott to himself, "a man like that would do a great deal for a first fling at life. Having tried it one way and proved it a failure, small wonder that he longed to see how the light and airy ways of wickedness contrasted with



his musty methods. And so"—this is Elliott still thinking—"and so he bartered his immortal soul to the devil in exchange for youth."

"To the devil!" mused Franklin; "I very much doubt if there is such a party."

The only argument he could recall in favor of the existence of the Father of All Evil was the oft-reiterated one as to the impossibility of unassisted human nature being capable of the dreadful enormities which are daily brought to notice.

Franklin was skeptical; he found it hard to believe in anything out of the common, not because he was incredulous, but because it was too much trouble.

He had no use for the devil; he had nothing against him; it was not in Franklin's nature to be prejudiced against anyone on mere hearsay. Very likely the devil was a good sort of a fellow in his way, and he, Franklin, would postpone his criticism until he had made the gentleman's acquaintance—if he existed to become acquainted with. He always returned to his "if." People say the devil may be called to earth by the recitation of a paternoster, backwards; Franklin tried it, but it was so long since he had prayed forwards that the backwards variety did not come with sufficient fluency to warrant more than one trial.

"Here I am," he said, in disgust, "on the very spot on which a played-out old schoolmaster brought his Satanic Majesty from hell, and if he, with his comparative ignorance could do it, surely I, a modern, with the superior advantages of telephones and phonographs and other electrical appliances, can do it—and I will, or be satisfied that the devil is only a myth.

"It's infernally stupid," he soliloquized. "How the others would laugh, if they heard me reciting invocations to the powers of darkness. However, there is no one to hear me, so here goes."

Franklin commenced an impromptu appeal to the old gentleman: "Here stands a poor devil!" Mr. Elliott laughed and commenced again, thinking it



injudicious to ask a favor on the grounds of relationship.

“Here, on the spot already dedicated to thy damned presence, stands a poor waif, an impecunious stray, whose state of comfort and happiness in this life is dependent on the pleasure of bigger idiots than himself. Oh, Satan! Oh, Lucifer! Beelzebub! Mephistopheles! by whatever alias thou goest, hear my unholy prayer. By all the evil deeds ascribed to thee in the past and the present, by all the foulest blasphemies thine own foul tongue could fail to parallel, I conjure thee—appear! Again I say, appear!”

Franklin sat down, almost exhausted by his exertions. “The devil may fancy this is a joke,” he thought, “but I’m hanged if I do.” He was hot; he mopped his brow, for large drops of perspiration trickled along his forehead.

“Phew!” he said at last. “The room is like a Turkish bath.”

As he spoke he turned his head, and there, at the left of his chair, stood a figure clad in the bright-red doublet and hose, the small cap with the nodding cock’s feather, the sallow face, deep eyes, and thin black mustachios of the accepted Mephistopheles.

Franklin looked him up and down for a brief period and then said: “Who are you?”

The personage in red doffed his cap and replied: “I am the devil.”

“The devil you are!” remarked Franklin. “D’ye mind the window being open?” and without waiting a reply he threw open the casement and inhaled a deep breath of the fresh night air.



## CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH SATAN, BEING ANXIOUS FOR A DEAL, CONCEDES MUCH, AND SIGNS A CONTRACT.

HIS Satanic Majesty watched his manœuvres with interest. "Art warm?" he asked.

"Everything on earth," answered Franklin, "goes by comparison. Compared to you no doubt I am freezing, but from a human standpoint I am registering at least ninety-six in the shade. I suppose you can breathe and go about without inconvenience in a temperature that would melt granite?"

Mephistopheles was reticent. He changed legs, and with an air of impatience began to talk business. "Mortal, what wantest thou with me?"

"My dear boy," said Franklin, "you are evidently unversed in the way of the world. It is customary to beat around the bush before getting down to hard and fast business."

The devil resigned himself to the situation, and sat down in the chair which Franklin had just vacated.

"That's right," remarked Elliott, cheerily. "Make yourself at home. I'm sorry I've nothing in the house to offer you. A cocktail would perhaps be about your figure."

"I have not left—to be worldly I'll say—mine office, to talk of cocktails, whatever they may be," growled the devil. "If thou can'st not rid thee of thine infernal diffidence, methinks I shall soon be constrained to leave thee."

"Gently! gently! my Elizabethan friend!" observed Franklin, undisturbed. "The ideas of the period in which you converse are no longer tenable



they are so unbusiness-like. You've lots of fellows below doing your work while you're away, haven't you?"

"An thou had'st one iota the experience in managing a large concern myself can boast, thou would'st know that when the head of a department is absent, subordinates are ever lax in the performance of duty."

"Quite so! you're right, though your way of putting it is out of date. Thee and thou for commercial purposes are extinct; in colloquial English they are never used. The second person singular of the personal pronoun has narrowed its circle of acquaintances to one religious community, to which, I presume, you do not belong."

Satan sniffed indignantly at the suggestion.

"I'll bring a chair up to the table for myself," Franklin went on, "and then we can talk comfortably."

He walked across the room and dragged another of the back-torturers into proximity to his visitor. Mephisto put his right leg across his left knee, and grasped his right ankle with both hands, the attitude being associated in his mind with contemplation.

"You don't seem to be on very good terms with yourself," broke in Franklin, after a slight pause.

"And is that surprising?" asked Mephistopheles, with a sigh. "I have been presiding genius of a Home for Lost Souls for more centuries than your puny brain can imagine days!"

"Come, come! no personalities!" laughed Franklin. "You see you're so open to reproach yourself for being such a blamed idiot in the first instance, that you're hardly the one to throw mud at another."

"You're right!" agreed Mephistopheles, "and that's a portion of my private hell. A great many of you mortals imagine my—place—to be a burning lake of brimstone, with fetid exhalations of supernatural bitumen grafted onto the asphyxiating gases of



decomposing vegetable matter. Nothing of the kind."

"You surprise me!" remarked Franklin, who in reality was not surprised at all. "What few thoughts I have given the subject certainly did favor the brimstone theory."

"I fancied so," continued the devil, with another long-drawn sigh; "but you are as wrong as you can be. Have you ever tried to imagine eternity?"

"I don't know that I ever have," mused Mr. Elliott; "but I will if you'd like me to."

"Don't trouble," said His Majesty, very considerately, "unless you wish to drive yourself mad. Hell, to make the matter comprehensible to your grovelling brain, is eternal monotony. Fancy yourself imprisoned in a chamber, black as the palpable darkness which fell upon the land of Egypt some centuries back. Fancy yourself in this horrid, tangible opaqueness groping with feverish, agonized hands for the mural boundaries of your misery; groping with wary feet, ever dreading some chasm to swallow you with your invincible unwillingness for death. Forward, you stumble; from side to side you oscillate in silent agony; your hands never touch; your eyes, so full of sight, are burning with an irksome blindness: there is no limit to your suffering. Your ears, alive to every sound, have no sound to soothe their pain! All is blankness! all is nothingness! You long for dissolution and yet you dread it. There is your worst punishment! Die you cannot, and though you'd welcome the deliverer he never comes. Think, then, as there is no limit to your dungeon, so is there no limit to your term; it is forever; for eternity. Never-ending monotony, never-ending agony, never-ending blindness, and maddening deafness through ages and ages. That is hell."

Satan, who had got on his legs during his oration, seated himself with what would have been a heavy thud had he been mortal. The perspiration



stood in great drops upon his brow, and his breath—or what did duty for it—came and went in short, heavy spasms.

“You’ll ruin your precious health if you get so excited over trifles,” remarked Franklin. “I never saw a fellow worry so much as you do.”

“Trifles ! Hell a trifle !” Satan was disgusted, and he showed it in his next observation. “It appears to me,” he muttered, “that we two are out of our right places. You should be the ruler of Hades, not I.”

“Well, I’m with you partly,” agreed Franklin. “What with my modern ideas on ventilation, sanitary improvements, and hygiene, all round, I guess I could whoop things up a bit, even in your played-out society.”

“I wouldn’t advise you to try,” said His Satanic Majesty, with a mournful shake of the head. “You might be sorry afterwards!”

“Say, old fellow, you’re growing devilish sentimental, and it doesn’t suit your style of beauty at all,” said Franklin, in his usual bantering tone; “so I’m going to sit right down and talk business with you.”

Mephistopheles pricked up his ears but offered no comments.

“Now,” continued Franklin, cheerily, “I want money; I’ve been living for some time on the bounty of my friends, and I haven’t more than about two thousand dollars left. Bad luck on the turf, due to the uncertainty of “moral certainties,” is my chief complaint. Two thousand, you may object, is a very fair sum for a young unencumbered man to start life with, but I have no trade, no profession, no talent, and am altogether too darned lazy to work. I’m not particularly vicious.”

“I know that,” interrupted Satan. “I’ve had about twenty of my smartest imps on your track for some time. They make very little headway. If you were only a saint we should have hopes of you, but you’re a cool, calculating customer, who won’t see the fun of



running crooked when it's easy to go straight. I was never more surprised in my life than when informed that you were calling for me."

"To tell you the truth," laughed Mr. Elliott, "I never thought you'd come; however, now you are here, we can draw up the contracts. Here's a chance for you to do a little conjuring. Let us have pens, ink, and paper."

Mephistopheles did not wave his arms in the air with the "no deception" theory in view; he did not even look at his audience with an "I'm-going-to-be-clever" expression. No; he just remarked, "There it is;" and there it was—an elegant bronze inkstand, the figure of a recognized devil carrying a barrel, which contained the ink. The pens were ivory-handled; in short, everything was of the best.

"That's not bad," said Franklin. "It's quite as good as the canary trick. You do the thing well, too, while you're about it. I expected an ordinary five-cent glass bottle of writing fluid and a half-sheet of note-paper, not this superfine legal foolscap."

"When you know me better," remarked Satan, "you will recognize my tendencies to be towards the best of everything."

"Yes," answered Franklin; "I noticed how readily you took to me. By the way, I've probably had more experience at drafting agreements than you have had. Have a cigarette, and if you'll just keep quiet for a few minutes, I'll fix it up for you in proper shape."

Mephistopheles took the proffered cigarette, lighted it without a match, simply applied it to his lips, and smoked in silence.

"That's pretty smart," said Mr. Elliott. "Of course I know it is a simple application of the heat generated in the human frame, which at present is allowed to go to waste; but as science advances we'll get onto little things of that kind and dispense with matches altogether."

As the devil seemed in no mood to argue the subject,











Franklin devoted himself to the drafting of the contract.

In a few minutes he had finished.

He threw away the remains of his cigarette, cleared his throat, and commenced to read the agreement.

"An agreement between Mr. Franklin Elliott, of New York, of the one part, and Mr. Mephistopheles Satan, of the other part—"

"Mephistopheles Satan will do as well as any other name," interrupted the gentleman of the other part, by way of comment.

"That's what I thought," agreed Franklin—"whereby Mr. Franklin Elliott agrees to forfeit all claims to his (Mr. F. E.'s) immortal soul so soon as the aforesaid immortal soul severs its business connection with his mortal clay; all interests, rights, and privileges vested in the above immortal soul reverting to the before-mentioned Mephistopheles Satan, who on his part binds himself to faithfully carry out in full whatever wishes the party of the first part, Mr. Franklin Elliott, may express during the term of his natural life. Any failure on the part of Mr. Satan, of the second part, to fulfil the terms of the agreement, will thereupon release Mr. Franklin Elliott from all obligations. Nothing herein contained constitutes a partnership between the two parties."

"There," said Franklin, "that may not be in precise legal phraseology, but you understand it, and I do, and that's all we want. Isn't it?"

"It seems to me to be fair and square," observed Satan. "No loopholes for you that I can see."

The last remark had a dubious tone to it.

"Of course not," laughed Franklin. "Honor among thieves!"

"That's the worst of it," grumbled H. S. M.; "if you were an average bad man, I could trust you, but I don't know what to make of you; you're a peculiar case, hence my particular interest in your damnation and my personal attention to the business! It's a



great honor I'm doing you. I haven't been away from home now for several centuries. It isn't necessary of course, for me, to be constantly with you. The agreement entitles me to send a deputy, does it not?" ventured H. S. M., by way of a feeler.

"No! I require personal attendance; the whole document reads personal attendance; the phrase 'carry out in full whatever wishes,' etc., clearly shows that."

"I object to that clause. I cannot be fettered in any way. I have great interests at stake, and—"

"Then we don't make a deal," broke in Franklin, preparing to tear up the contract.

"Stop! Give me time to think it over."

"Very well. I'll state what I expect, and you can agree or not, as you please. I don't care which. In the first place, you must be to me as a valet, and in the second, if I ask you to work the supernatural for me, you must comply."

Mephistopheles considered; he had not had a vacation now for some centuries, and there were several new things on earth he was anxious to study—but a valet! His pride rose at the thought. He, the once brightest angel of them all, to be a body-servant! Oh, degradation! indignity!

He swallowed the indignity, however, and seizing the pen, said, "I agree! I'm tired of the uncertainty. Let's get the papers signed, and the matter off our minds."

"Very well," assented Mr. Elliott. "It's you who have been doing all the kicking, mind! Can you write, or will you make your mark?"

With an expressive shrug, the father of all evil seized the pen, dipped it savagely in the ink, and wrote, in almost illegible characters, "Satan."

"You seem to be in a beastly temper," remarked Franklin, taking the pen from the devil's hand, preparatory to signing the paper himself.

"I am," growled the Infernal ruler; "I've had bad news."



"Mother dead?" asked Elliott.

"I've lost a soul," answered Satan.

"Cast a hoof, you mean," said Franklin, in a serious tone of voice.

"A man I reckoned upon has disappointed me. He has repented on his death-bed, curse him!" hissed the devil, between his teeth. "If there's anything I detest, it's a man who doesn't die game."

"Now I differ with you entirely," argued Elliott, "I consider the man deserves every credit. He has been bluffing you all through his career, and he finally scoops the pool with a pair of deuces. I admire him."

"Bah!" snorted Mepphy. "I'm sure of you, at all events."

"I trust you don't claim any credit for that," mildly interposed Elliott. "I originated the idea, and have carried it out to what will be a successful conclusion, if you'll draw in your horns. Any signs of inflation on your part, and I refuse to affix my name to the agreement."

"I apologize!" exclaimed H. S. M., in a mild manner. "Don't let us fall out at this stage of the proceedings!"

Franklin stared the fallen one straight in the eye, until his contempt had made itself visible, and then scribbled his signature below Satan's.

"There!" he said, giving a final flourish to his name, "there is the document, signed and sealed and delivered."

"I should have liked your signature in blood," timidly suggested the devil.

"With pleasure!" Franklin was ready to meet him in every way. "If you've any blood you want to get rid of, I'll write my autograph with it, if you like."

Satan did not deem it advisable to press the point; he took the paper up, glanced over it, folded it neatly, and stowed it away in a wallet which hung at his side.



"Now," said Franklin, in a new tone, adapted to more lively topics, "before we start on our trip, you'd better change your clothes."

"What for?" demanded his Highness, in surprise.

"They're out of date. Nobody wears red tights and black-and-red trunks nowadays—at least not on Wall Street. The nineteenth century is more practical than the fifteenth, if not so picturesque."

"But this is my only suit," objected Mephisto.

"It must be dismissed with costs, nevertheless," retorted Franklin. "Get into yonder wardrobe; send a myrmidon to the nearest tailory for a check suit—something like mine—and leave money for it. I'll be no party to any dishonesty."

"I don't like the idea of wearing ready-made clothes," grumbled Satan.

"Perhaps not; but you've no time to choose what you'd like."

This settled the discussion, and Satan retired into the cavernous gloom of the old wardrobe. Franklin heard him in earnest altercation with some one for several minutes, at the end of which time he issued forth, radiantly attired in a well-fitting but particularly horsey-looking tourist's suit, containing checks to a large amount.

"How do I look?" inquired Satan, turning his head completely round to admire the back view.

"A regular dude!" laughed Franklin. "All you want is a hat—a silk hat—and a pair of russet gaiters, and you'll make a sensation wherever you go."

Satan smiled at the unsolicited admiration tendered, and confessed to having ordered a complete outfit, which would be sent on to whatever hotel they stopped at.

"There's another point, however," observed Mr. Elliott, "before we venture out into the wicked world. We shall have to settle on a name for you. I can't call you 'Satan,' or 'Devil,' or 'Lucifer' wherever



we go. It would appear profane, and might call attention to you."

"Very true. You forget nothing," said the devil, with genuine humility and an acknowledgment of Franklin's superior intelligence.

"Suppose," continued Elliott, "we call you Mr. Tann, with two Ns, and keep the S and A for initials. Catch on? Then you'll be Mr. Silas, or Saul, or Samuel, or Sadler A. Tann."

"I like Sadler myself," chuckled the devil, who was tickled to death with the idea; "Sadler A. Tann! What does A stand for?"

"Andrew, Ambrose, or Adams," answered Franklin. "Adams will be best, I guess. If anybody asks you what your A means, say you were christened Adams in honor of the President of that name; but the A won't trouble you much. Better get some cards printed; and it will assist matters considerably if you talk with a 'Daown-East' twang."

"I know it," said Mr. Tann, cheerfully; "we're well stocked with Down-Easters below. I had to give them a special reservation. Hell would have been simply unbearable if we hadn't admitted their claim to exclusiveness."

Franklin enjoyed this complimentary allusion to his New-England brethren, but did not let on to his companion that he considered him capable of exciting appreciation, even unintentionally.

"I think," he went on, after a pause, "we'd better familiarize with each other. I'll call you 'Sadler,' and you'll please to get the mastery of the feeling of awe I naturally inspire, and address me as 'Franklin' or 'Elliott,' whichever you like."

"Cert'nly," said Mr. Tann, in his new accent; "but I prefer Franklin; Elliott brings back painful memories of what I can never forget."

"Memory has its drawbacks. There's room for a proverb on the subject. 'Tis folly to remember when forgetfulness is bliss,"



"Sounds like the name of a song," ventured Sadler; and he followed up his remark with a question. "What is your idea of music?"

"People tell me I have no idea of music," answered Franklin.

"Then you don't require much pressing to sing, I reckon," said Sadler, with evident intent to be funny.

"Don't do that," reprimanded Franklin, rather sharply. "I want you to be witty and original in future. Retailing gray-bearded chestnuts in my presence is likely to detract from my reputation."

The devil, or, as we shall henceforth call him, Sadler A. Tann, hung his head in shame at having called forth this reproof.

"Yes," continued Franklin, "if you can't say smart things, be silent. Silence—that is, intelligent silence—and wit are blood relations."

Thus ended the conversation.

Franklin went to the door of the room, and, not being able to open it, desired Mr. Tann to pick the lock, which burglarious achievement that gentleman accomplished in the drawing of a breath. The two then walked down the rickety old staircase to the street, which, the evening being well advanced, was almost entirely deserted. They left Faustus' lodging behind them and, side by side, proceeded in the direction of the hotel, the particular name of which does not matter to the gentle reader.

Sadler A. Tann registered and engaged a suite of rooms.

Franklin led his new friend up to the room, in which his companions were smoking and drinking.

"Say, fellows!" shouted Mr. Elliott, in his most hilarious tones, "I've found a countryman of ours in this deserted hole. Don't rise; no ceremony; he's one of the boys. Aren't you, Sadler? Mr. Sadler A. Tann—Jack Harper, Barney Bleecker, Ulysses Smith. There you are. Sit down, Tann, and make yourself comfortable."



Sadler shook hands all round, expressed his delight at making their acquaintance, and sat down to a whiskey-and-water with all the abandon of an old toper.

"You'll know them better some day, Sadler, won't you?" questioned Franklin.

"I hope so," replied S. A. Tann, with a meaning smile.

They sat drinking and interchanging experiences, in which latter amusement Mr. Sadler proved himself a most accomplished liar. On several occasions Elliott found it necessary to bark Mr. Tann's shins as a warning not to overdo it.

Mr. Sadler's tongue became looser with every drink, so that Franklin, as a measure of precaution, forcibly took him from the whiskey and led him to his apartments.

"Mr. Tann," lectured Franklin, as he threw Sadler upon the bed, "you are three-parts full, and in another ten minutes you would have told those others all about our agreement."

"I guess not," responded Sadler to this onslaught; "I'm not a gol-darned fool."

"You're a very good imitation," sneered Franklin; "and you'd better supply yourself with a strong constitution. A devil who is unable to defy intoxication is way below the standard!"

"Rubbish!" retorted Sadler A. Tann, feeling quarrelsome. "I'm not here to be talked to by you."

"What!" muttered Franklin, seizing Tann and shaking him, "you answer me back! You're only my valet, after all. Don't let me have any impudence again, or I'll give you notice."

"To think," growled Sadler, subsiding under this treatment—"to think that I have to endure this for a shoddy soul like yours!"

"We start for Paris to-morrow morning, so have your grip ready, and be up early to pack mine," ordered Franklin. "Undress yourself and go to bed. Good-night. Don't forget your prayers."



### CHAPTER III.

#### IN WHICH THE DEVIL TAKES HIS FIRST RAILWAY JOURNEY.

FRANKLIN lay awake in the morning, wondering whether or no he had been dreaming during the night; for he had a crazy recollection of having sold his immortality to someone. He was still in a state of uncertainty, when there came a knock at the door.

"Who's there?" shouted Franklin.

"I guess I am," replied a strong Down-East accent.

"Who the devil's I?" asked Franklin at the top of his voice.

"Sadler," came the reply.

"Come in, Sadler," cried Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Sadler A. Tann, for it was he, came in without opening the door and seated himself on a chair at the head of the bed. Franklin looked at him curiously for a moment, and then saw that he had not been dreaming.

"It's a great morning out. I've been up nearly two hours; had a bath and took a stroll through the town," said Sadler briskly and with intense satisfaction.

"What's the time?" queried Elliott.

"Eight," replied Sadler.

"What!" gasped Franklin; "eight! You must be a blamed idiot to come rooting around at such an unearthly hour. Eight o'clock! It's all very well for you who can do without sleep altogether; but I'm a different kind of chip."

"Don't get angry, Franklin," soothed Tann, "I won't repeat the offence. You must make allowances



for my ignorance of mortal customs. Is there anything I can do for you ?”

“Yes: favor me with your absence. I shall be glad to get to Paris, if only for the sake of seeing a newspaper from home.”

“I’m better off than you in that respect,” said Sadler. “My foreman has orders to bring me a report every morning, and if the returns are not up to average, somebody will probably be reminded of the existence of Sadler A. We are obliged to work with double energy in these days of cheap labor and foreign competition.”

Elliott, completely ignoring Tann’s presence, had turned over and was sleeping the sleep of the conscienceless. Almost on the stroke of ten he awoke, jumped out of bed, and dressed with the assistance of his infernal valet, who was still on hand.

Sadler, in fact, did all the work of packing the trunks and grips, and fastening them; then they adjourned for breakfast, settled half-a-dozen hard-boiled, and their accounts, and, to the consternation of Franklin’s friends, left for Paris on the first available train.

Sadler was as interested as a child on its first railway journey. He gazed intently out of the window at the scenery, and occasionally turned to Franklin for geographical information. It was so long since he had been on earth before that the general appearance of the towns and villages through which they sped was novel to him.

The two conversed without fear of restraint, as they had the compartment reserved to themselves; a luxury which Sadler’s money provided.

“Something like travelling this !” mused S. A. Tann.

“Yes—for France. Beastly slow train for all that,” was Elliott’s reply.

“Old Faust and myself were nearly two months getting to Paris four hundred years ago,” said Sadler



A. Tann, with a sigh born of the recollection. "Ah! what a man he was for gayety."

"I guess," broke in Franklin, "you could enlighten us on many vexed questions; you could tell us the secret of perpetual motion, and reduce the chemical elements to about one-third, and reveal the components necessary to the manufacture of gold."

"I could! I could!" agreed Sadler, sententiously, but wearing his bump of secretiveness aggressively prominent.

"You could if you like"—Elliott hinted—"tell us if there is any truth in that hatchet story of George Washington."

"I could, but I don't mean to," snapped Tann.

"It is the duty of those who possess knowledge to distribute it."

"It is a duty I intend to neglect. There are things I am not at liberty to disclose."

Mr. Tann leaned back upon the soft cushions as if desirous of terminating the conversation, and Elliott, willing to oblige, followed his example, and as a result fell off into a comfortable sleep.

Tann, however, was not sleepy; he was too thoughtful; he had plenty to employ his mind. He had always considered Elliott's a bad case; experience had taught him that saintly people as a rule make the best victims; they have but to fall ever so slightly, and the rapidity of their motion down the declivity leading to the broad road is startling. But these good-natured, easy-going fellows, who were not mean enough to calumniate or slander, who didn't see the sense of intemperance or dishonesty, and whose high standard of womanhood made them wary of the shady members of the sex, they were his stumbling-blocks. His percentage amongst erstwhile saints was satisfactory; the work was hard, but the harvest was sure: but these other fellows whom nobody ever suspected, these others who enjoyed themselves, who were always ready with a smile for all and harsh



words for none; he hated them. That is why he considered Elliott a tough problem to solve. None of his subordinates were equal to the task, so Sadler allotted it to himself; and here he was taking his first ride in a railway train, like a drummer going where the exigencies of business directed.

It will be as well to explain that Sadler A. Tann, Esq., had on his former terrestrial sojourn neglected to endow himself with capabilities for gratification as shown by men in eating, drinking, and sleeping, but that, experience having taught him wisdom, he had not repeated the error. His near approach to intoxication the previous night was due to the injudicious indulgence of his fresh humanity.

To enjoy drink, one must thirst; to find pleasure in eating, one must hunger, though company at meals adds to that pleasure; to test the sweetness of sleep 'which knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,' weariness is necessary. These were the several consolations of existence Sadler wished to experience; and to acquire the joys he knew it advisable to endure the pain.

These seeming digressions are merely for the sake of anticipating explanations of motives which would otherwise be necessary later.

Sadler looked out of the carriage windows, and noted with what speed they flew by the hedges and posts and trees; and those long poles, like masts of ships with wires connecting them all, he wondered of what use they were.

It was fun to him to see the horses scamper across the fields as the vociferous, puffing, rattling train rushed on; to hear the children, from their seats on railings and fences, cheer as they passed.

Now they were waking the peaceful laziness of a rural scene; now adding their quantum of smoke and noise to the blackness and bustle of a manufacturing town; now echoing and dinning through a narrow way cut in the hills, with high walls of dull-gray rock rising to a dizzy height on either side; now clanging



over an iron bridge, spanning some sluggish stream, with banks lined with silvery alders, and in whose shallow waters the cattle waded, heedless of the passing train.

Sadler's eyes feasted with avidity on these rapid changes of art and nature, as cuttings, meadows, embankments, rivers, tunnels, and woods alternated in rapid succession.

Readers may scoff at Tann's simplicity; but a second thought will remind them of the peculiarity of his situation: he was used to only one kind of scenery.

Meanwhile Franklin slept on.

Sadler began to get homesick. Poor fellow! he was so lonely; his companion was selfishly breathing with great violence in a corner of the compartment, and he had not even a book to read. He had picked up a volume from the bookstall with the intention of buying, but Mr. Elliott had rudely taken it from him, saying that it was not fit for him to read.

Sadler began to hum, "Mid pleasures and palaces tho' we may roam, Be it ever so humble there's no place like home." His fancy travelled below, and he wondered how much his old friends and associates missed him now he was gone.

By and by the pangs of hunger asserted themselves, and Mr. Tann conjured up a cold chicken and a bottle of moselle.

Franklin woke up as soon as the luncheon appeared, and immediately praised Sadler for his thoughtfulness.

"Good boy, Sadler!" he exclaimed. "Glad to see you were thinking of me."

Mr. Tann accepted the commendations as if he had come by them fairly.

"D'ye know I'd sooner have the power of doing things like that than have an inexhaustible bank account," said Elliott, uncorking the moselle.

"Dare say!" remarked Sadler, filling his mouth full of chicken.



"If you had ever encouraged a railroad sandwich, and had it chained to your peritoneum, like Prometheus to Mount Caucasus, with your vitals gnawing away at it, and your digestive organs playing on it night and day for weeks with no perceptible effect, you would appreciate my desire."

"Are these sandwiches so very bad?" asked Sadler, making a mental note of avoidance.

"They vary in wickedness with the elasticity of the bread and the antiquity of the ham fibres," answered Franklin. "You couldn't give me the recipe for that cold-chicken-and-moselle trick, could you, Tann?"

"I could not," was Tann's reply, in thick, white-meaty utterance.

"Don't talk with the mouth full," rebuked Elliott. "It is not usual in good society."

"Who says I'm in good society?"

"I apologize; I qualify my assertion: in society that was good till you intruded on its privacy."

"You've got your back up because I won't let you work miracles," sneered Sadler, angrily.

"I may not be able to work miracles, but," said Franklin, coolly, "I am capable of knocking the day-lights out of you, if you don't keep your place."

"You forget that I am immortal!"

"I'll believe that when you have vanquished the steel-riveted sandwiches I spoke of."

"Rats!" answered Tann, in the vernacular of the day.

"You are vulgar!" said Franklin. "I don't know where you can have acquired that expression."

"We have a varied assortment of fellows down below, who make use of that animal observation."

"Well, I forgive you," said Franklin, holding out his hand in token of reconciliation.

"The forgiveness is mutual," politely rejoined Sadler; and they were friends once more.

Railroad travelling was nothing new to Franklin, and



the novelty of the experience was bound to pall even on Sadler, sooner or later; and, as darkness threw its shadow over the landscape, the sooner was earlier coming than it would otherwise have been. Night passed away, and morning dawned and grew into day; breakfast-time merged into the luncheon hour before the engine slackened speed, and, with the brakes pulling double, came to a standstill in the Paris terminus.

"Now, Sadler," shouted Franklin, jumping out of the train, "you're the better linguist, so negotiate for a fiacre while I look after our trunks."

"Right," answered Sadler, as Mr. Elliott disappeared in the excited crowd of Gauls.

"If there is any language I'm great on, it is French; we do a lot of business with France. I remember about the time of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew—"

But Mr. Tann here wandered from speech into thought, and what might have been an interesting exposé was lost. When Franklin returned with a porter and the trunks, Mr. Tann was still in a brown study.

"Where is the fiacre?" asked Franklin.

"Oh!" exclaimed Sadler, disentangling himself from his thoughts. "You *did* startle me! I forgot all about it."

He soon made up for his negligence, and the two were speedily seated in a vehicle, debating where they should stop.

"Tell him to drive to the Trans-Atlantique," said Franklin, at last.

Tann put his head out of the window and did as directed, in excellent French.

"I guess," remarked Franklin, as they rattled over the rough stones, "that all languages are pretty much the same to you."

"They are all the same," said Sadler. "I am as good at Hindustani or Japanese or Kamschatkan as I am at French."



"So am I; better, if anything," was Franklin's rejoinder; but Sadler A. Tann did not offer to laugh.

"Say, old fellow, which was the original language of the Garden of Eden?" asked Mr. Elliott.

"There are things, as I observed before, which I am not at liberty to disclose," answered Tann, decisively; "and, moreover, science will some day settle the question for itself. I will not forestall science, for which I have a deep regard."

On the completion of this sentence, silence fell upon them both.

The vehicle stopped, and a double quartet of voluble garçons emerged from ambush and commenced hauling away at trunks, rugs, and grips with noble disregard of the owners' intentions.

The weary travellers surrendered at discretion, and consented to stay at the hotel in which their luggage was already stopping.

Franklin dashed into the office to engage rooms. Sadler remained on the sidewalk to settle with the *cocher*.

It was Mr. Tann's first experience in this direction.

"*Trois francs, cinquante centimes*," shouted *cocher*, thinking to get the best of the foreigner; but Sadler knew too much to be thus imposed upon.

"You can take two francs and be satisfied."

"*Deux francs!*" screamed *cocher*, waving his arms around, windmill fashion. "*Mon Dieu!*" Then he lapsed into broken English: "You think to make a fool of me, Monsieur Jean Bull Beef."

"You are mistaken," replied Sadler, calmly; "I am no Britisher; I am a gol-darned Yankee, and don't you forget it. Two francs is the limit."

He forgot to say what the ante was, probably because of his ignorance of poker.

"*Trois!* three," vociferated the hackman. "You call yourself a shentleman! *Prenez-garde!*" whereupon he jumped off the box and got his feet into kicking position.



"See here, stranger, let up on that," said Sadler, pushing the excited Frenchman with his right hand. "Don't attempt intimidation with me."

"*Vous me frappez ! Sacre !*" yelled *cocher*, and the sidewalk was covered with French oaths.

"Gee-whittaker !" thought Sadler ; "there'll be a scene. He'll have me arrested for assault."

"Three francs !" howled the Frenchman, shaking his fist at Sadler, and preparing for a vigorous rush.

"Very well !" said Mr. Tann, disgustedly. "Here's your money, and I'm a blamed idiot to give it to you. Understand, I pay under protest."

The dispute ended when the money was paid over, the driver not caring what the payer was under so long as the extortion prospered. Sadler retired into the interior of the hotel, thoroughly sickened at the wickedness of the world in small things.

"What's the matter ?" hailed Franklin, as he saw Sadler coming in with a brand-new frown on his never-happy countenance.

"Matter !" echoed Mr. Tann. "Just been beaten out of a franc and a half by a two-for-a-cent cabman. It's not the money, I care about—it's the idea of me being swindled by a foreigner."

"Never mind, Sadler," consoled Elliott. "It's a greenback to a nickel that that youth will drink himself into a state of deadly intoxication on *petit-bleu* or some other fancy cordial, go home, beat and perhaps kill his wife. You never know how much good a quarter will do."

Sadler brightened under this suggestion, and forgot his troubles ; whereby it will be seen that Elliott was something of a diplomatist, knowing the kind of consolation likely to be efficacious, and applying it according to the directions on the bottle.

This narrative is devoted almost exclusively to the connection between S. A. Tann and his human friend, with the idea of showing moderns that many curious things happen in their midst of which they are not



aware. If we do not enter into a minute description of Paris, it is for various reasons, some obvious, others not: firstly, because a description of that gay city would utterly fail to satisfy those who have visited it; secondly, because to those who have not been there a picture of any other city would be equally satisfactory. We have heard the French metropolis described as a city of gas and glass, of mirrors and lights, also of cheap claret. Strangers are apt to run away with the idea that the women of Paris are more beautiful than those of any other city; it is a mistake. The average Frenchwoman is homely of feature and unnatural of movement; but the art of dressing to advantage and minimizing defects is so completely mastered, that the mistake referred to is pardonable in those whose ideas of beauty are obtained in a *coup d'oeil*.

Sadler A. Tann and Elliott have been in Paris three days already, with opposite results in each; the former being delighted with everything, the latter satisfied with nothing. (From this, an unobservant reader may conclude from that Franklin was easily satisfied.)

"I wish I had your nature," he said to Sadler, one day at luncheon. "You enjoy everything. You saw a man run down by an omnibus the other day, and while everybody else was stricken with horror, your face was on a broad grin. You were positively pleased."

"I was indeed," agreed S. A. "It is only from a thorough appreciation of trifles that true contentment springs."

"And yet you grow uneasy over things which I pass by unnoticed. Isn't it so?"

"It is," said Sadler.

"Then your notions of beauty don't agree with mine; and, understand, I have no desire to be introduced to any of your disreputable connections." Franklin continued. "There are men who appreciate bleached fairness in combination with artificial complexion, but I'm not one."



"So you did not admire my blond friend?" laughed Sadler, stroking his chin meditatively; "she was very, very much impressed with you."

"I noticed that," said Franklin, with a shiver of disgust. "If there's anything I dislike, it is being gushed at. That sighing and languishing and making what they call *moues*, or some other ridiculous term, simply tires me to death."

"My dear boy," said Sadler, "all trick, all affectation, born of a fondness for jewelry and furs."

"Yes; well, it don't go with me, Mr. Tann," decided Elliott, bringing his hand down on the table with a bang. "I guess I can get along without them."

"Pooh!" sneered Sadler. "We shall have you setting up as a saint next."

"No, I'm no saint," retorted Franklin; "but there's something peculiar in my nature. I've had what some would consider a fair share of racket, and experience has taught me that a true woman is more valuable than diamonds or rubies."

"Scripture now!" scoffed Sadler.

"And," Franklin went on, without noticing the interruption, "the persons you bring me into contact with are so much below my standard of womanhood, and so repulsive to me, that, after all, there's no credit to me in being virtuous."

There are many men like Elliott; more than people think. Whatever weakness there was in his nature was corrected by the strength of his disgust for un-womanliness.

Sadler often sat up late at night, wondering how on earth he was to lead Franklin Elliott into the paths of wickedness. He could not understand the want of logic displayed by his companion, nor the want of success experienced by himself. The man was his, and yet he wasn't; he could not control Elliott's will, and it worried him. Why should he worry, when the question of Franklin's futurity was settled to his satisfaction? What did it matter to him how good



Mr. Elliott was, so long as he belonged to him, Sadler?

Mr. Tann was on his mettle for all that; he should not feel sure of his bargain until he had steeped it in every excess.

After luncheon, they drove for an hour or so in the Bois. Mr. Tann was alive to all the notorieties of the demi-monde, and he pointed most of them out to Franklin. Many a smile was wasted on Elliott that afternoon; many a warm glance was frozen by his unresponsive stares. Those who showed a desire for Franklin's society were the last to get it. On the way home Mr. Tann grew out of all patience with his friend; he expressed himself as weakening in his love for Franklin, but the only reply he received was a very impolite request to go to —.

Elliott did not complete his sentence, for at that moment a carriage flashed by containing two ladies and a gentleman. One lady, middle-aged and with a stately bearing; the other young, not more than seventeen, but resembling her senior; the gentleman was old enough to be the young lady's father. He was; and the elder lady was his wife and her mother.

"Did you notice that trio?" asked Franklin of Sadler, as the carriage rolled out of earshot.

"No, I didn't," grunted Mr. Tann.

"I did!" said Elliott. "That's what I call pretty. Didn't you see the loving look in the girl's eyes as she talked to her mother, and what pride the parents both of them felt in their sweet young daughter?"

"You saw all that, did you?" sneered Sadler, "Deuced observant all of a sudden!"

"Yes!" sighed Elliott. "We Americans like to see true family affection, when it breaks out naturally. Now, there was nothing ostentatious about that little party, and yet I'll bet all I've got they're as happy a trio as you'll find anywhere on earth."

"You make me tired," remarked Sadler. "Maybe that's your idea of happiness?"



"You've hit it, Sadler A. Tann," said Elliott, "though I've no particular desire to get married. One reason I should not like my wife to know you."

"You're complimentary, anyway," observed Sadler, in a huff.

"Well," laughed Franklin, "you know who you are, and so do I; and you must feel that you're hardly a desirable acquaintance for anybody."

They finished their drive in silence; Franklin thinking how pleasant it would be to settle down into a state of marital cosiness, now that it was clear to him that the pleasures of "life," in parentheses were, so far as he was concerned, played out. He was in a quiet mood during dinner, and Sadler, knowing his thoughts, grew frantic to such an extent that Franklin was compelled to remark it.

"What's wrong with you?" he asked. "Isn't the *consommé* good?"

"It's you I am not satisfied with," replied S. A. Tann. "You're not acting fairly by me. You don't love me as you ought to."

"Sadler! Sadler!" remonstrated Franklin. "You know as well as I do that I only use you. Between us it's business from the word go, and the moment I see any signs of shuffling on your part—it's all off."

"You're doing all the shuffling in this deal," retorted Sadler. "Why can't you be dishonest? Do something, man, to gratify my wishes!"

"Nonsense, Sadler!" said Elliott. "There is nothing in the contract about gratifying *your* wishes. You have to gratify mine."

"Come," entreated Tann, "there's no hard and fast line in a mutual agreement like ours. You could easily stretch a point."

"There's no mention in our agreement about my stretching or doing anything disreputable. Is there? If I feel any desire at any time to accomplish any act of vice I shall do it to oblige myself, not to



please you. I guess I don't need any devil to help me, one way or another."

"Hush! Don't speak so loud. Don't give me away!" begged Mr. Tann, as one of the waiters drew near.

"Bah!" exclaimed Franklin, raising his voice intentionally. "If you don't like it, you know what you can do, don't you?"

"All right, Franklin! Don't get angry," whispered Sadler, as the waiter placed the *entrée* before him.

"Angry!" Elliott laughed, "have you ever seen me lose my temper? No! Well I guess I'm not going to give off any energy on a—"

"Hold on!" implored Sadler. "Everyone's looking at us; go on with your dinner."

And Elliott, too indifferent to pursue the subject, resumed eating.

When they had finished their repast Sadler proposed a theatre, and Franklin, knowing of nothing better to pass away the evening, consented.

"By the way," said Sadler, as they went upstairs to dress, "we have both been elected members of the Itinerary."

"What's that?"

"Oh, it's a club," answered Tann, "for the convenience of Americans and Englishmen who happen to be passing through or spending the season in Paris."

"And we are elected! Who told you to put me up?" enquired Franklin.

"Nobody; but I knew you'd be willing. It's good business," replied Sadler.

"You'd better consult me in the future as to what I wish to belong to," said Franklin; "and, moreover, understand that if you are proposed for any club of which I happen to be a member, I blackball you."

With this parting thrust, Elliott entered his room to don his evening attire.



## CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH MEPHISTO WITNESSES THE OPERA "FAUST,"  
AND THE STORY TAKES A SERIOUS TURN.

THERE was a large and assorted audience assembled in the — Opera House. The diplomatic corps of various nations, with the stars of each other's orders glistening, metaphorically, on their breasts ; the military profession, with stripes of merit and war-medals resplendent ; and the colony whose pride is neither in stars of orders nor in stripes of merit, but in the stars and stripes, that greatest of all decorations, had each its complement of representatives. Sadler's experience as a theatre-goer was naturally limited. This was only his second visit in a few centuries. When he was showing Dr. Faustus round, four hundred years back, stage representations were almost unknown. He had then seen a miracle play, and had felt sore over the harsh treatment meted out to a poor harmless devil, the best actor of the crowd.

Sadler A. Tann had no premonition of what he was destined to view on this occasion ; he had too been careless to make use of the prophetic abilities lurking under his mortal exterior.

After lingering in the foyer to chat with a few acquaintances and smoke a cigarette, and also to exhibit the evening dress-suit which, for the first time since the world was evolved from the chaotic void, garnished his limbs, he strolled jauntily into the private box reserved for his use. Franklin had promised to join him later ; our very unromantic hero was keeping an appointment at an American friend's, which compelled his absence for the first few minutes of the entertainment. Sadler A. Tann opened his pro-



gramme listlessly, just to see what it was he was paying for, and was much surprised to notice that the piece was entitled "Faust." He fell into a reverie wondering if the play was about the man he had been so intimately connected with in the past. The tapping of the conductor's baton, warning the musicians to be on the alert, interrupted his reflections, and the brilliant overture commenced.

Mr. Tann was enthralled ; he had heard of the soothing effect of music ; for the first time in his career he experienced it. The flowing harmonies carried him away into a sort of dreamland, in which he almost forgot eternity. He leaned well over the ledge of the box, and, keeping time with the band, swayed his head to and fro like a python making ready for a final dart. Every opera-glass in the house was levelled on him ; numerous questions of the "who is he ?" and "where does he come from?" order were asked. His sallow face, black mustachios, and attenuated goatee inclined a large majority to favor the idea that he was a Spanish nobleman of some account ; others inclined to the belief that his sallowness was due to an influx of bile, and that his leaning over the box could be ascribed to the same cause.

This is an excellent opportunity for a description of our diabolical hero, but it shall be let slip. Oh, Mr. Tann, you are in heaven now—or as near as you can be. The orchestration and the harmonious catch-as-catch-can wrestling of a couple of melodies led him to confess that the music of the spheres never equalled what he was then hearing.

Sadler had drunk into his ears the spheral music so often talked of ; he had sung his first ballads to its accompaniment ; but the ties of old recollections parted like rotten twigs in the soul-stirring beauties of this music. Chords of brass and of wood, with trimmings on the strings, resounded through the house, and awed him into a sense of humility before man's talent. No devil had ever composed an opera, or



written a play or a poem; he blushed for Hades. It was behind the age in everything mental and athletic. Sadler's opera-glasses were on the edge of the box near him, and hence a ludicrous scene which materially interfered with the general appreciation of the overture. In craning forward to spread out his ear so as to more readily engulf within its tympanic depths the now familiar melodies, Mr. Tann's elbow came with some force into contact with the glasses, which were thus launched at random into space. Where would they be sure to alight? It is extraordinary how such accidents usually happen to irate old gentlemen whose tempers are ready to explode over the merest trifles—and it is no trifle to stay the downward career of a heavy opera-glass, once it has settled into its stride.

There was a delicious bald head in the parquet; it was a smooth, glistening pink poll of more than average beauty. It was no small, conical head; it was a polished globe of pleasing dimensions, slippery as a ball-room floor, and as carefully kept. Into the exact centre of this fair expanse dropped the opera glasses with a soft thud. The old gentleman for a brief minute bowed his head beneath the mighty stroke and gave utterance to a prolonged "Ooh!" Then he rose, and pulling a silk handkerchief from his pocket, held it to his damaged cranium, while he raised the theatre several degrees—in English. Without attempting to focus the glasses, he threatened to force them down the etc. throat of the (list of adjectives, simple and compound) ruffian who had mistaken him for the Emperor of Russia.

Those who had witnessed the occurrence laughed unfeelingly, and those who had not, shouted to the old gentleman to sit down; which, after swearing some more and searching the house for his concealed foe, he did. Franklin entered the box at this moment, and sat down to a perusal of the programme. Reading the name of the opera he laughed



heartily for some seconds, then asked for his glass to take a look round the house. Sadler mentioned that he had dropped that instrument of torture into the parquet. The lorgnette had been given to Elliott by a friend since dead, so he had been anxious to keep it in grateful memory. Unthinkingly he went down to enquire after them; the first person he questioned directed him to the bald-headed gentleman. But why dam the free flow of the story to linger over the riotous proceedings which followed? Franklin's polite enquiry was greeted by a vicious snort and yell of triumph; a soft, perspiring hand was spread across his face, as if to render him insensible, and before he had time to resist he was lying on his back amongst the old gentleman's feet. The ushers were on the scene in an instant, and four of them escorted the bald-headed victim of mistaken Nihilism up the centre aisle, protesting in a loud voice, at the French and their organized injustice and hatred of the English. His money was not returned, but his seat was sold over again a few minutes after.

Elliott rejoined Sadler A. Tann, crumpled but amused at the novel experience. He made no remarks, however; he simply did with the matter what Tann had done with his opera-glass, let it drop. The overture had finished while Franklin was engaged down-stairs, but owing to the disturbance the rising of the curtain had been delayed.

All was quiet with the exception of the slight crackling sound made by Franklin's dress shirt as he pulled the wrinkles out of it. The curtain rose, and the scene was disclosed: Faust's chamber. Was it to be wondered at that Franklin found it hard to restrain his laughter? Not knowing what was coming, S. A. Tann was slow to realize the humor of the situation.

His sixth sense, that of the ludicrous, was probably missing or in the possession of one of those aggravating creatures who laugh to the full extent of their



leathern lungs at anything and everything. But when his own mediæval double slipped through a vampire-trap and assumed an attitude of conscious cynicism and salaried devilishness, he felt injured in his tenderest feelings. The stage Mephisto was a large, fat man, very ungraceful, ungainly in fact, with a deep bass voice, which in action resembled the noise of heavy pieces of ordnance lumbering over an iron bridge.

"I'm not in the least like that, am I?" he asked Franklin, with some trepidation lest the answer should be yes.

"Not now," answered Franklin, "but it's probable you were, four hundred years ago. A century or two makes a wonderful difference in a—person."

This silenced Sadler for a few seconds; then he began muttering to himself: "We didn't sing. What rot! Who ever heard of people singing over such important business transactions? I'd have left him if he had lingered on high notes. I never walked round in a spot of red light. Oh, it makes me tired!"

When Faust changed from the old man to the youth, Sadler's excitement carried him away to such an extent that he got up in the box and said, "Bah! not a bit like it!" loud enough for everybody to hear. Elliott pulled him back into the shade of the box, and but few knew whence the remark came. The tenor on the stage did, for one, and that was why his cadenza didn't arise with its usual fluency. Nevertheless he recovered in time to bring the audience round to his way of thinking, and the curtain went down on the first act amid tumultuous applause.

"If you're not careful, Sadler, I shall be compelled to take you home," threatened Mr. Elliott.

"Oh! who could sit quiet and see the whole affair misrepresented in that way."

"You let such trifles rattle you!" laughed Franklin.

"Come out and have a drink. You're hot and feverish, my young friend."



Sadler not objecting, they went down-stairs to the salon, had a claret and seltzer, smoked a cigarette, and returned to the box in good spirits.

In the next act the doings of Faust and Mephistopheles at the Kermesse, and the succession of choruses, interested the audience and worried Sadler out of all patience; but Franklin had a watchful eye on his friend.

"Did you see that? Did you see that?" questioned Sadler, as the representative of Mephistopheles poured the dregs of wine on to the ground, and the flames sprang up.

"Isn't that all-fired rubbish? Now d' you think I'd give myself away like that. I never did it. No devil of any sense would do a d——d ridiculous thing like that."

"Be quiet," remonstrated Franklin. "It's only a play."

"I don't care," cried Sadler; "I don't care a continental how wicked they make me, but I'm darned if I'll have people labor under the impression that I'm a thundering jackass."

"Wait and see what they do with you in the next act," said Franklin. "You'll be quite satisfied, I promise you."

They sought the refreshment counter again and indulged in another drink after the second act; but Sadler's offended dignity was beyond all soothing.

The next act only made matters worse; Mr. Tann's indignation increased in volume, and could not be restrained by any frail dam of etiquette. "I never was such a fool as that," he objected. "That fellow's a palpably wicked cuss. D'you mean to tell me that I go round standing in devilish, stupid, malignant attitudes like that? Do I wear a there-shall-be-no-mistake-about-me-I-am-the-devil look all the time, as this idiot does? Why, he wouldn't deceive a two months' old babe; he's labelled. Marguerite was a much harder person to tempt than this young female;



and another thing, *my* Faust would not have looked at her twice. He was a connoisseur of female beauty; I had tempted him with about twenty before he decided on Marguerite."

He persevered in this strain throughout the evening, in spite of Elliott's requests to "quit it," "shut up," and of numerous kicks of admonition.

"I don't know where they got this version of the story," continued Sadler. "It's not correct. Marguerite's father was alive; he was a widower; really invented printing. There, I've given that away, and I didn't intend to. This Martha they've introduced into the story, never existed."

"She was good enough for Goethe!" mildly interposed Franklin.

"Um! Goethe wasn't so particular as I am. I never walked round with any old woman whose facial epidermis was too large for her. I couldn't do it, Franklin. It's a libel on me, and I'm not in a position to resent it. And we never gave her jewels; she wasn't the sort jewels would cajole; not she. Faust played the pious game; made her a present of a prayer missal, rolled his eyes to heaven the while he winked his spare eyelashes. The silly girl believed us. Her father—we had to get rid of him; he ordered us out of the house. Ingratitude! I'd given him a pointer about casting type; but we inoculated him with measles or something, and Marguerite was left an orphan. By the way, her name wasn't really Marguerite; that was only a pet name we gave her, just as you might call your best girl, Daisy."

"Will you let up on this drivel and allow me to hear what's going on?" requested Franklin.

"Oh!" sighed Sadler, "you're like all the rest; so long as you're not directly affected you don't care. I may suffer, and you don't feel it. I may be libelled and represented as a palpable devil and you don't mind. Marguerite! Pah! she didn't wear her hair in that Spanish onion style. He was six months



courting her, and if I hadn't been there to encourage him I don't believe the girl would have listened to him till now. Dear little thing! I was sorry for her; she did take his deceit to heart so. He behaved to her very badly; I wasn't to blame. I left off tempting him and it was all his own wickedness, not mine. Man doesn't need so much assistance, after all. I told him plainly what I thought of him. I said if I were in his place I would marry the girl, and he insulted me, and told me I was not a man of the world. I'm older and wiser now—four hundred years older. I've had to keep up with the times. Faust was ahead of the times. As the world has grown more corrupt, I have. Man advances in wickedness, and I have to keep a trifle ahead. The calling of a devil used to be laborious; but, now that there's less fear of the future and more belief in the mortality of the soul, it's comparatively easy. It's a beautiful theory, is the rule of love, but that of fear is worth a dozen of it in practice."

"Are you going to moralize much more?" enquired Franklin, who was wearying of this soliloquy.

"I'm not talking to you," answered Tann. "I'm thinking."

"Well, think in a whisper, if you don't mind."

Franklin turned his back on his friend and centred his attention on the stage. Sadler ceased his comments, and, ignoring the progress of the opera, gazed into the half-lighted auditorium.

There was a closely packed assemblage of heads, surmounting snowy shirt fronts and bare shoulders. Sadler philosophized like a Sartor-Resartian sophist, less on the ethics of clothes, however, than on the apparent disregard of them by many of the ladies present. What would the fifteenth-century Marguerite have thought of this garden of semi-Eden attire? A sea of heads! Long lines of countenances merging and blending into one vague impression of pallor through the obscurity; eyes deeply in-



tent on the picture of human weakness and perfidy exemplified on the stage; that is what Sadler A. Tann saw from his sequestration. The house was hushed in interested stillness. One head moving occasionally towards another betokened whispered conversation; but no sound disturbed the spell woven by the strains of melody floating through the auditorium. Suddenly a flaming piece of canvas fell from above, upon the stage, close by the singers. There was a short half-second of deathly silence, while each person in that vast concourse felt his heart halt midway in its beat and the blood recede from the veins, leaving the limbs stricken with a numbing coldness.

Then came the awful cry of "Fire!"—by whom raised none ever knew, and the throng, panic-stricken, poured towards the doors a vast wave of humanity. Too many, alas! in the danger which is the test of true heroism, panted in despicable dread, trembled in every selfish fibre, not for the lives of others, but for themselves alone. Strong men, forgetful of their manhood and oblivious of all instincts of chivalry, trampled madly, blindly on weak women and helpless girls.

Doors will not open; bolts cannot be drawn; corridors and stairways become choked with frenzied heaps of living creatures, wedged fast and hopelessly in the narrow passages, and, in their battling and yielding, screaming to God, or weeping in their importunity.

The writhing sufferers cling to each other with the grasp of madness! And yet, of what avail were a giant's strength?

Many imagine the saving of one to be the loss of all, and with thoughtless, despairing hands bear him down, encompassing his doom and theirs.

Up the stairs the crowd seethes, like waters in a vast cauldron, chasing round and round, under and over, with bubbling, hissing, and groaning. Women and men stumble and fall prostrate; those behind, with the



brutality of terror, endeavoring to make their bodies a step to safety.

The crowd presses on and on, over the senseless and the dead; cruel heels trample, unseeing and uncaring, on tender faces. Closer and closer they crush! Those from behind bear with concentrated weight and force on the living obstacles before. The scant width of the way, and the impassable rampart of the fallen, check further advance. If the walls would but burst from the fearful pressure as a dyke from the angry rush of waters!

Then comes the darkness to hide the agony on their faces and to increase the awing fear at their hearts.

Numbers gasp imploringly for air, white and suffocating, to find relief in insensibility; with bruised and fractured limbs, with breath crushed out of the frail tenement of flesh and blood, inanimate forms are held erect in the throng and tossed about and clutched at with seeming hatred by those who in trembling consciousness fight for life on every side. Men whose natures are saturated with the atheistic promulgations of the age, abased in spirit, call on God in their agony and fear!

Still that barricade of the fallen! still the dead-lock of closely wedged corpses!

The fearful cries of the women, the heart-wrung groans of the men, the short, hard breathings of exhaustion, and the half-smothered curses of the strong, whose power profits them naught, mingle in a horrid hell of sounds which no ear could endure, no pen describe.

Meanwhile the flames advance; the dry canvases, the old dust-covered scenes in the dock, and the seasoned woodwork of the stage fall ready prey to the usurping foe. His progress is swift and irresistible. The tongues of fire already lick the sides of the proscenium, and long shoots of bright red-flame burst from the gilded traceries of the ceiling. Dark columns of filthy, rancid smoke roll from the raging furnace



behind the footlights and penetrate the corridors, where the conflict continues in all its horrors.

The flames spread to the auditorium, the soft plushes and rich silks of the curtained boxes ignite as if by magic, and the vast area is soon radiant with the baleful glow. Rafters and stucco fall from the quivering roof. The crackling, rushing furnace grows second by second; the fire has already reached the latest strugglers in the living mass. Ah, heaven, have mercy!

Where are Tann and Elliott?

They rose with the others when the heart-chilling word of warning rang through the house, but neither participated in the panic. Franklin's gaze met Sadler's, and they understood each other.

For a brief period they stood watching the terrified rush, and Franklin's usual assumed callousness fell away from him.

"Come out, Sadler," he muttered; "I can't see such a scene without questioning God's mercy."

They went outside their box into a passage not more than fifty inches wide, to ascertain in what manner their escape was to be effected. There was a small window about seven feet from the floor. Tann stood on Franklin's shoulders, burst open the small panes, and looked out.

"There is a fall of about forty feet into a small yard," said Sadler, with imperturbable calmness.

"Forty feet!" said Elliott; "that's a long distance; but we can do it with the help of our box curtains."

"Good!" replied Tann; and Franklin let him down.

They tore the two curtains down from the rings and firmly knotted them together.

"There'll be two more in the next box," said Tann.

"I'll get them in a second," was Elliott's reply.

He entered the adjoining box, which was red with the lurid glare of the approaching fire. In the corner was a young girl on her knees in prayer; her face was pale, and her lips almost white, with the know-



ledge of impending doom. Despite her womanish terror and trembling limbs, she was preparing to meet her doom with the noble resignation and unquestioning faith of a true believer. When she perceived Franklin she staggered to her feet and stretched out her hands to him in voiceless appeal. He drew her gently to his side and said reassuringly.

"We will save you." Quickly releasing her he tore down the curtains from the pole on which they hung.

"My dear parents, I shall never see them again," faltered the girl to herself; but with a mighty effort she repressed her grief.

Franklin was busy. He had fastened the curtains together and with his foot on one was tightening the knot.

"Come with me," he said, when the tie was secure; and the girl followed him.

He rejoined Sadler and handed him the curtains. Sadler knotted all four together, first glancing in surprise at the girl.

"Nearly long enough!" he observed, measuring the result of their labor with his eye.

The three stood in the passage. Sadler climbed up to the window on Elliott's shoulders and broke away all the woodwork. The window was small, scarce large enough for a broad man like Franklin to crawl through.

"Ready up there?" gasped Franklin.

"Ready!" echoed Sadler.

"How far will there be to drop from the end of the rope?" asked Elliott.

"From twelve to fifteen feet," answered Sadler.

"Come down!" shouted Franklin.

Sadler descended.

Franklin, lifting the girl up in his arms, raised her to the window. Small pieces of glass adhering to the casement cut the tender hands which held the rope, but she tightened her grasp, and Sadler payed out the improvised cable. The girl disappeared from sight.



Tann let the rope out leisurely, and when near the end climbed again onto Franklin's shoulders and held it out at arm's-length, to lessen, as far as his reach allowed, the distance she would have to drop.

"She's safe," he said to Franklin, "but sprained her ankle, I fancy."

"I'll go next," said Franklin.

Tann pulled up the curtains and joined Elliott on the floor. With his friend's assistance Elliott clambered up the ledge and seized the rope with his firm grasp.

"Let'er go, Gallagher," he said, and down he went slowly and surely, hand over hand. Being the heavier of the two, his weight finally balanced Tann, who of course was holding the end up at the window, whence he flippantly remarked, "See you later."

Then Elliott dropped, close on twenty feet it must have been; but the inmates of the house to which the yard belonged had provided a feather bed to break the fall. A little shaken, he got on his feet again and enquired for the young lady. She was within the house.

Franklin entered and found her lying on a dingy horse-hair sofa, calm and tearless, too dazed as yet to realize the change which had come over her life. She endeavored to rise when he approached, but it was evident her ankle pained her. There was also a deep cut two or three inches above the shoulder, caused probably by a piece of the broken glass. It was bleeding profusely, but the good people of the house were ready with assistance and remedies. The wound showed dark against the fair skin, which was scarcely concealed by the laces of her gown, and Franklin was indignant at somebody or something, he didn't quite know what. That scar was his doing, he concluded, thinking somewhat sadly that in that scar the memory of the dreadful catastrophe which left her an orphan and gave her a friend (himself) would never die.



"You are a brave girl," said Franklin, in that quiet tone of commendation which from him carried so much weight.

She tried to smile at him, but her mouth twitched nervously and the tears began to flow down her cheeks. Franklin was surprised at the effect of his speech. It had turned the tide of her feelings. She had borne up heroically through all, until his simple words had loosed the flood-gates of her soul, bringing the blessed relief of tears.

Franklin, with a new, indefinable feeling at his heart, which had in it something of responsibility, put his arm around her and stroked her head in a tender, fatherly way. Honest, manly sympathy it was, if nothing more. The poor, heart-broken girl submitted to his caress like a confiding child, and for a brief period she sobbed out her grief on his shoulder. Then he left her to the ministerings of the good ladies of the house, and awaited their pleasure in the adjoining room.

He had more than enough to reflect upon, in his own affairs, but his mind had enlarged its scope. Self was put away into an obscure corner, to be debated at odd moments when other important subjects were wanting.

He asked himself if the Providence, which sees the fall of the sparrow, had led him to the doomed theatre in order to save this ideal picture of budding womanhood. He liked to think so.

Her sorrow touched him as though in part his own, and he made a mental vow to watch over the safety of the desolate orphan he had rescued. He called one of the servants of the house to him and asked him to get a carriage. Franklin supported his new charge to the door, and gently lifted her upon the soft cushions and ordered the man to drive to the Trans-Atlantique.

\* \* \* \* \*

To his surprise he discovered from the clerk that she was staying there; her parents' name and her's



were on the hotel register : Mr. and Mrs. Woods and Miss Woods. Franklin conducted her to her room, left her with two sympathetic chamber-maids, and then, uselessly but well-meaningly, had every delicacy there was in the hotel taken up to her. When sure she would be well cared for, he strode out of the hotel in the direction of the opera house, to find Tann. The fire was now at its height, the whole building wreathed and festooned with flames. It was a gloomy, threatening night, and the low clouds caught the ruddy glare and spread in a dull, crimson pall over the whole city. Innumerable fire-engines were on the scene. Countless jets of water were being poured upon the doomed building; like veritable fire-fiends the pompiers crawled from casement to casement, their faces blackened with the smoke and scorched with the heat. Body after body was rescued from the furnace, to lie unrecognized, unclaimed. From every quarter of the city poured the crowds of anxious sightseers; from every den and alley came the scum of the great city, surging and screaming and yelling with various emotions. Down fell a mighty burning beam from the roof, and a shower of gleaming, blazing sparks scattered broadcast in the heavens. The architecture of the theatre was traced in flame. Inside there was a rushing, heaving, swirling whirlpool of fire, dashing against the denuded walls like waves against a breakwater. In time the heat prevailed, and on the side overlooking the street the wall bulged and threatened to fall. The crowd swayed in terror and those in front attempted to get back; the wall tottered, crumbled and hurled itself with crushing weight upon the screaming concourse below. There was a repetition of the panic which had reigned within the burning theatre; many were injured, some few killed.

Long into the night the fire burned.

With the faint streaks of dawn the conflagration, impossible of subjection, had spent itself, and the crowd gradually thinned away. Of the theatre there



remained only two blackened walls, standing like gaunt, miserable skeletons; the rest a heap of smouldering masonry, charred beams, and twisted girders, beneath which lay many who, a few short hours before, had planned a cheerful future for their lives, and had formed their gladsome pictures of what was to be. And now! their plans and happy pictures, hopes and aspirations, dreads and fears, all dead! Ambitions, strivings, hates, and loves consumed with them in the ruins!

Franklin found Sadler sitting on the steps of a house opposite the scene of the disaster, his head supported on his hands, his arms propped upon his knees, his whole attitude betokening thought.

Franklin, in no mood for sleep, sat down by his side and waited for him to speak. He did at last. Turning to Franklin he remarked, with a laconic brevity which gave a key to his long spell of reflection, "I'm sick of the whole business."



## CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH TANN POSES AS A FRIEND OF MAN, AND  
MEETS THE JUST REWARD OF HYPOCRISY.

THERE they sat for hours as silent as obelisks; the clouds which had threatened rain floated away to shed their moisture in other lands, and the sky cleared. Four o'clock rang out in solemn sonorousness from the spire of Notre Dame, other chimes chanted the self-same hour in brazen chorus, and then the city slumbered again. Low down in the east the dark blue of night paled before the day's approaching glory; the broad roseate shafts sped swiftly across the arch of heaven, and the hosts of darkness trembling fled. Dawn gave place to day, and leaving Paris to the cheerful light, the advance guard of Phoebus marched farther west, routing the night as it went.

Tann and Franklin watched the last flames die amongst the heaps, saw the firemen pouring copious streams upon the smouldering mounds of cinders, and the former, chilled from exposure and hungry from long fasting, took his companion's arm and walked rapidly towards their hotel. By five they were in bed; five minutes later both were asleep. Franklin, wearied though he was, actually said his prayers before retiring. Being a seasoned, careless specimen of manhood at best, it was not a rule with him to perform such small offices, but a narrow escape from death called for gratitude to some one, and even if the saving *was* due to infernal agency, was not the agent a standing, incontrovertible proof of the existence of an omnipotent Providence? The sceptics who



chance on these pages must take the devil as a motive for the hero's exceptional nicety on more than one occasion.

At the risk of being accused of flippancy, we will neglect the serious opportunities created by the tragedy of our last chapter and exploit the lighter vein deemed more indicative of wisdom. Hence, if we touch almost imperceptibly on our heroine's sorrow, be lenient to us and take for granted more than is written about her.

She's a dear little thing, is Violet Woods. When we were introduced to her we decided that; and a long acquaintance has afforded us no excuse for altering our opinion.

She was neither blond nor brunette; her hair borrowed the salient beauties of both. She was fair when the sunlight rested on her head, and dark in the shade. If you think the description absurd, smile! Her eyes were of a deep, tender brown, with a sufficiency of gravity to spice the mirth; her nose was of no particular nationality, though it had a tendency to the classic Greek, which we think more suitable to femininity than the Roman type. But her mouth! Would that we could call in some artist, who is not too busily engaged in idealizing users of soap or weavers of complexions, to pour out the artistic instincts of his soul in a picture of it! Small, arched, childish, but self-reliant! Firm but sympathetic, impressionable but steadfast, all contradiction, and lovable for its very contrariness. Pah! it's no use attempting to convey her charm in words; only those who know her can comprehend the drift of our inanities.

During the succeeding weeks Franklin was brought into frequent communication with her, and quite unconsciously fell under the spell of her delightful child-like gravity.

Even Tann, though in secret hating her for her purity and the atmosphere of unobtrusive goodness she



seemed to bring with her, was compelled to admit that she was a very nice little girl; not so attractive perhaps as Cleopatra or Helen of Troy, but still for a life-partner undeniably more satisfactory.

However, while, out of respect for Miss Woods' sorrow, we pursue our course for a time without her, we can still fill in with Tann and Franklin.

The latter was the first down to breakfast in the ordinary the next morning. He was discussing a veal-cutlet disguised in some extraordinary manner, when Sadler entered adjusting his cravat.

"Might dress yourself before you come down," was our hero's morning greeting to the immortal one.

Tann accepted the rebuke in silence; sat down on the other side of the table and spread out a newspaper with the intention of reading a full account of the last evening's disaster.

"Shocking! Horrible! Five hundred dead!" said Sadler, rubbing his hands gleefully, and chuckling to himself.

"Well! what is it?" asked Franklin, with evident meaning in his tone; but Tann deemed it advisable to moderate his enjoyment.

"I've an appointment at the morgue after breakfast," he stated.

"It's a place that ought to fit your style of humor, Tann."

"This is a dreary world," sighed Sadler, "and any style of humor should be acceptable."

"In default of better. Unfortunately for your success as a funny man, my friend, there are scores of after-dinner humorists who can give you points and beat you."

"What dy'e intend doing about the girl?" queried S.A., turning the conversation.

"Miss Woods is capable of making her own arrangements. It will be merely my pleasure to carry them out."



“ Oh, how touching ! ” sneered Tann. “ How’s the poor ankle ? ”

“ It’s no business of yours. ”

“ Oh!!! ”

A long silence followed this monosyllabic remark.

Sadler was the first to break it:

“ If I’m not back by dinner-time you’ll know I’m dining out. Good-morning. ”

His Satanic Majesty retired from the breakfast table, donned his hat, took his walking-stick and passed out into the bustle of the city.

Elliott sent his card up to Miss Woods.

She consented to see him; but their conversation was of necessity sad, and as we desire to spare our readers all possible sorrow, it is best unrecorded.

As the day wore on, Franklin, wandering about in listless way, fell into reveries over the brown eyes, and the nose of slightly Greek tendency, and— Oh! hang it! every man has been in love some time or other, and, no matter what the color of the eyes or the set of the nose, the lover’s sentiment is just the same.

Besides, Franklin was hardly that far gone; he was at the head of the incline, ready for the downward course, but he was still stationary.

At half-past seven Elliott sat down to his solitary dinner; but solitude did not blunt the keen edge of his table-d’hôte appetite.

Tann’s absence spared him the incessant and oft-times jarring rattle of that worthy’s tongue, and between courses he could dream in a vague way of vague things.

After spending an unusually long time over dinner he provided himself with cigars and went out to refresh his lungs in the purer atmosphere of the street.

The air of Paris varies according to location; it is as picturesque to the nasal organ as a Neapolitan ice to the eye.

Rounding different street-corners you get different flavors; now a pure whiff of heaven’s best; now a



whiff of river-mud, or a zephyr laden with vegetable decomposition, or some other odor, not the more welcome because unexpected. In the daytime this diversity is lost in the distractions of city life, but in the evening of a hot summer's day, when the side-streets are deserted and civilization is concentrated on the boulevards and in cafés, the most unobservant of travellers must notice it. Please understand that we are speaking not of the main thoroughfares or the boulevards, but of the less important channels of commercial enterprise.

It's wonderful, the distance a pedestrian can traverse when he has a pipe or a cigar with him. The cloud of smoke which he blows seems to indicate that the furnace is in full blast and that steam is at a high pressure; but when the cigar shortens to an untimely end his speed slackens, and shortly after the rejection of the stump he is apt to come to a standstill.

Franklin moved along with a long, swinging stride which took him over the ground very quickly, and when he thought it time to turn back, was probably four miles from his hotel, where we will leave him to find his way back. For we are neglecting Tann, and Tann may feel hurt. Tann had wandered too. He had passed the afternoon sentimentalizing by the tomb of the great Napoleon, and bird's-eye-viewing from the top of the Arc de Triomphe, both of which were new to him. He had his dinner in a restaurant, and after surprising the regular patrons by the insatiability of his maw, and earning the ill-disguised contempt of the waiter for the smallness of the *douceur*, wandered about much as Franklin did later. This peregrination led him into the lower quarter of the town, lower not topographically, but socially speaking. There the streets were narrow and the houses high and old-fashioned. The sun was still considerably above the western horizon, but it was twilight in the remains of old Paris. Tann, happening on this interesting, picturesque "bit," felt constrained



to rake the soil of his memory over to bring the older recollections uppermost. He fancied that he recognized that hostelry at the corner block, the Oriflamme: yes; it was a celebrated inn in Faust's time. It was the Bonnet Rouge now.

The old house with the coat-of-arms over the low, narrow door was once that of the Duc d'Ivrogues! How things have altered in the last century! The long reign of inaction has ceased, and the third estate has roused itself to the belief that it is as capable as the first or second, and has as good a right to respect and riches. The trouble begins only when the extremists lead the gregarious third to think that it has a better right to breathe on the earth than the parasites, the gold-grabbing capitalists, and the lazy, contemptible vermin who enjoy the fruits of parental industry. While Sadler, steeped in meditation, pondered over the sloping roofs, low rooms, diamond-paned windows, and dark beams adorning the outer mediævalism of the buildings, the Bonnet Rouge was thriving. Numbers of rough-looking men entered the inn, some washed, but the majority in their blue blouses and the addendum of dirt customary after a day's work.

"Wake up, citizen!"

It was an unfamiliar voice Sadler heard, but the tone was familiar. He turned round and a horny-handed son of toil winked at him and addressed him again.

"Lost your way, my brother?"

"Oh, no; thank you!" replied Sadler, sweetly.

"From the provinces?"

"No."

"I thought you had a Brittany accent."

"Maybe I have; but it must be through taking Brittany butter with my bread; I prefer it to any other. I have never lived in that part of the country."

"Where *do* you come from?"

"Well," answered Sadler, gravely, "*you come from* where I'm going *to*—if there is such a place."



"Bah! You are a friend of the people, I hope."

"Sir," exclaimed Tann, grandiloquently, "I am for the brawn of a nation ruling a nation. 'The people' is God, and if the people likes, it is all-powerful."

"Good, my friend! Come with me. Hear me speak. I am no educated fop, no desk-taught pedagogue; but I have within me the magnetism for the multitude. I can sway a crowd; with my little finger I hold the sword over the aristocrats and the bourgeois. You love the bourgeois, perhaps?"

"I hate all men: high or low, black, white, or red! Whatever their creed, whatever their hue, good or bad, I hate them!"

"Very good! All men are fools. Follow me, and I will show you something."

Our poor unsophisticated devil followed his new acquaintance down the street; at the Bonnet Rouge he halted, took Sadler by the arm, and turned inside. Up a wide oaken staircase, with a broad balustrade colored a deep brown from age and varnish, they proceeded; arrived at the landing they walked along, and opposite the foot of the second flight was a door, whence issued sounds of revelry and a confused murmur of voices.

"I am Renny," said Tann's new acquaintance.

"I am Marchand," informed Sadler, concealing his identity for a variety of reasons.

"Jean, or Jacques, or Raoul, or what?" asked Renny.

"Yes, Jean will do as well as anything else."

"Pardon!"

"Yes, Jean it is."

Renny pushed open the door and on the threshold bowed his head to the storm of applause which greeted his appearance.

He strode down the long, low-ceilinged room, Tann close on his heels, and seated himself on a chair at one end of the long table. He offered Sadler a seat on his right hand, and, preparatory to the business of the eve-



ning, whispered a hurried account of the gathering: that it was purely a workmen's club, that their views were extremely extreme, and that the hated police watched them and compelled them to moderate the fierceness of their utterances; but that this evening the officer was one of them, etc., etc.

It was a custom with these workingmen to meet every Thursday evening to condemn the government; it didn't hurt the government and it amused them.

Tann's appearance in their midst was a source of disquietude to them; his tweed suit was so unmistakably fashionable, his sallow face so sleek and evidently well-cared-for, that it seemed impossible he could be an anarchist; but Renny was with him, so the explanation would be sure to be satisfactory.

The pet orator rose and struck the table twice. That was the signal for silence. After a deliberate pause, filled up by passing his long, bony fingers through his kinky black hair, Renny spoke, and his first remark was greeted with more than the ordinary enthusiasm.

"My—our, I may say—aristocratic guest has signified a desire to pay for drinks for the Brotherhood."

The shout which greeted this statement was equal to that patriotic specialty, a hearty British cheer.

Renny knocked on the table again. "Silence! Moreover Jean Marchand wishes each honest artisan to name his own particular fancy: whether it be the aristocratic Champagne, or Burgundy, or Bordeaux, Chablis or Macon, Chateau-Lafitte or Chateau-la Rose; the cellars of the world are at your disposal to hide your grievances in."

Here the cheering renewed itself with great violence, and lasted until the proprietor appeared to learn the cause.

As a hundred voices commenced ordering at the same instant, the din became deafening, but Renny



knocked on the table with the crock match-holder, and quietness ensued.

"The waiter will go all round, and each citizen will have the goodness to whisper his requirements."

The proprietor vanished, and two waiters succeeded him, with paper and pencil to take down the multitudinous imbibements. Renny, in this half-silence essayed to speak.

"Citizens, we have met here so often, and have voted the same resolutions of 'Death to the Capitalists' and 'À bas la Bourgeoisie' so frequently, that any variation may possibly meet with your approval."

Hear! hear! or the French equivalent, from several. The main body was too absorbed in the delights revealed to them by the wine-list to pay much attention.

"I have enlarged your minds on the enormities perpetrated by the moneyed class; I have demonstrated to you the sordid avarice which influences every movement of the bloated monopolist; and you have believed in my tirades, my denunciations, my withering sarcasms."

His criticism of his own sarcastic powers was modest, to say the least.

"Though I have said the same thing in different words time and oft, you, with an indulgence which does credit to your intelligence, are never weary of hearing me. They call us the vulgar herd, as if we were so many cattle; we are no more cattle than those who live by the pen. There is nothing degrading in labor; nothing ignoble in dirt when it is honestly acquired; and yet they collect all the contemning words in the language and empty them in a heap of foul garbage on our heads, these blood-sucking vampires! these sordid, carrion-loving vultures! these vermin in the fur of nature! But I forget, in my natural indignation at your sufferings, the purpose for which I am standing here. It is to introduce Jean Marchand to you; to let you hear from his own lips



how he has abjured his heresies, how he has dedicated his life to the people, and has sworn by his father's grave in Père la Chaise to have vengeance on the nobles for what he will tell you. Waiter, a *demi-bouteille* of Moselle for myself and friend."

The friend was Sadler, who was figuring up the probable total of his wine bill.

The end of Renny's speech was greeted with the usual noises of approbation, which died away when Mr. Tann arose and pawed the air for attention.

"Gentlemen," began Sadler, "that title—generally linked with the possession of blue blood—is the prerogative of any man who behaves himself, and" ["Bravo! Bravo!"] "is as much your right as anybody's else. Our mutual friend Renny has told you that I am an aristocrat. It is true"—here Tann bowed his head in shame—"but it is not my fault. Am I to blame because I have a genealogical tree?" [Cries of "No!"]

"Besides, I have cut down the tree, and, in coming here this evening, I prove a desire to extract the very roots from the soil. What credit is there to you in being angered against the wealthy? Little; but I—I stand on a high pedestal of sincerity when I say, 'Down with the wealthy!' Some credit is due to me—but alas!"—here he sighed—"it's a bad debt which I never hope to collect. Listen to me! I am by right a duke; but I have abjured my dukedom." Thereupon he launched forth into one of those anecdotes which have justly earned him the title of the father of lies. "In my early days I was a sailor in the navy; I was a midshipman on board *La Belle Hélène*. An elder brother was heir to the family title. After two years' service, our vessel was wrecked in a typhoon in the Malay Archipelago, and was lost with all hands—mine amongst the number. But though lost, we—some of us—escaped with our lives to a small island, one of an insignificant group, hundreds of miles from any habitable spot. For ten weary years I resided on that



sand bar with my few companions. By degrees they died away like the echoes of cannon-reports at sea, and I was left alone. In fine, I was discovered and taken back to my beloved France. My brother was dead, and a cousin was wearing the title as comfortably and unsuitably as he would a cast-off coat of mine; it didn't fit him at all. I requested him to give up and vacate; he laughingly replied with some indecent remark about possession and nine points of the law. I brought him into court, and those nine points were prodded into me and into the judge, until the case was thrown out. They couldn't prove I was an impostor, and I could not prove I wasn't, and the possession carried the day. That is why I hate the aristocracy; this common, ruddy-faced, porcine noble lives in the branches of my family tree, and I am forbidden to wallow in the dead leaves. Oh, my brothers! what is material loss to sentimental loss? It is immaterial. In my misfortune I have discovered that a blue blouse is better than blue blood; fain would I don that honorable garb, but that I dare not labor with my hands, though I live by my hands. I am a pianist."

This unblushing lie earned him a world of sympathy.

"I dabble in nocturnes and rhapsodies, but in spirit my hand is on the trowel and my heart is mixing mortar. You have heard my story, and I trust that I may be allowed a worker's post at the next barricade. I hope to be foremost in storming the banks and the pawnbrokers; and to show my sympathy with the Social Revolution, here is my subscription."

Tann drew out his pocket-book and placed three or four bills to a good amount on the table, but there were eager eyes which saw the considerable sum he carefully replaced in his breast-pocket.

Renny bowed to the applause which Tann had earned, and seizing his face in his greasy paws, kissed him.



Sadler was silent under the infliction, but secretly in great trepidation lest the crowd should elect to follow the orator's example. He need not have troubled himself; the majority were not ripe for sacrifices of that nature.

After hearing a few long-winded dissertations, and assisting in the passing of a unanimous vote of destruction to monopolists, and of surgical treatment to the moneyed warts on the hands of toil, the meeting disbanded and dribbled away to its tenements. Several of the members lingered behind to drink at Tann's expense, Renny amongst the number. About half-past twelve Sadler declared his intention of going home, and although two of his newly made acquaintances offered to accompany him, he declined with firmness.

"Good-night, Renny! Good-night, brothers!" said Sadler, cheerily. "Good-night!" hailed the brothers in chorus; and Mr. Tann—Marchand the pianist—stepped out into the street.

By this time Franklin had discovered his error, and was striving to repair it by finding a cab. But, although it had been raining a thin, penetrating drizzle for some minutes, such a luxury as a vehicle was unobtainable.

The rain saluted Mr. Tann as he left the Bonnet Rouge, but he turned up the collar of his coat and strode along indifferently. Two of the Brotherhood followed at a respectful distance. Not knowing Tann's ignorance of the locality, the revolutionary gentlemen were puzzled by his movements and eccentric manœuvres, his studying the names of the streets and palpable hesitation at the corners. Tann hustled along occasionally, hoping to meet some one to direct him, but he could never get near enough to enquire his way of them. He was hardly nervous, in spite of the dark, threatening, evil aspect of many of the alleys and courts he passed; his two friends still followed in the deeper gloom close to the houses. The streets



were now on a sharp decline, showing that the river was close at hand ; the buildings were chiefly warehouses and mercantile offices, as busy in the day as they were quiet and deserted at night. Heaps of refuse, mouldering straw, and diseased vegetables decked the gutters, accentuating the unsociable surroundings ; infrequent low-looking wine-shops, from which sounds of revelry and boisterous laughter issued, relieved the gloom reigning between the far-apart street lamps. Sadler hurried along, ignorant that his late associates were quickening their pace to overtake him.

The road led him to the river, as he supposed, affording him an opportunity to locate himself, by recognizing buildings along the banks. On the right the street took a narrow turn between a dreary warehouse and the first approaches of the bridge ; this led to a wharf and a narrow footpath under the first arch. The quarter not being fashionable, the lighting facilities were few, and, on the bridge as well as under it, darkness held its own without opposition. It was the plan of the two friends of man to cut Tann off from the bridge and run him down to the edge of the quay, where, after having collected more money for "the cause," they could with ease drop him into the Seine. This delicate attention was frustrated by Sadler's fleetness of foot. The friends and brothers were about five yards behind when he gained the bridge. Not to be baffled, however, they started after him at a trot. Tann was concluding to infuse cheerfulness into himself by means of a cigarette, and was searching his pockets for a match, when the brotherhood reached him. The larger of the two ruffians raised a weighted walking-stick and brought it down with terrific force on Sadler's head, crushing through his derby hat and denting his skull very severely. Without a sound Tann fell forward upon his face.

"Very good, Pierre!" said the short ruffian.



"*Peste!* A weak blow! He is only stunned, my friend. I thought to kill him," rejoined Pierre. "Either his skull is more than ordinary thick, or my arm has lost its strength, Roger."

"What matter? A stun is as good as a kill. Here is the money." Roger had turned the insensible body over and had searched the pockets with success.

"Now drop him over into the river."

"Ah no! show mercy as you expect it, my dear comrade!"

"I don't expect it. Bah! will they lessen our term because we were too chicken-hearted to finish our job!"

"Your arguments are always convincing, my little Pierre."

The pseudo-political agitators raised the insensible body in their arms and rested it on the balustrade of the bridge.

"Good-bye—my brother," said Roger, in burlesque melodramatic tones; "we shall meet again in heaven—or—"

"New Caledonia," said Pierre.

"Very good for you! Ah! our friend here will know too soon whether there is a devil or not."

Meanwhile a pedestrian had been rapidly approaching from the other end of the bridge, but so engrossed were the two villains in their work that he was almost on them before they perceived him.

"Hist! we are seen!" whispered Pierre. "Let us run!"

"Good! start on."

Pierre needed no second admonition; Roger, on the other hand, lingered sufficiently to give their victim a rough push, which rolled him off the parapet and launched him into the flowing tide, twenty feet below.

"Hallo there!" shouted the new-comer, as Roger took to his heels. "What's wrong?"

He rushed to the balustrade and looked over just in



time to see an inanimate form whirling in an eddy and strike with force against one of the buttresses. There it remained for a brief interval, while Franklin—for the average reader will have guessed it was he—decided that saving the victim was preferable to punishing the ruffians. Off went his coat, vest, hat, boots; with a light leap he bounded onto the parapet, and, not more than touching with his right foot, propelled himself into the dark water beneath. He sank, rose almost immediately, and struck out for the central support of the bridge, the stonework of which was shielded by wooden piles covered with slippery green slime and rank weeds. It was here he had last seen the body; the force of the current had carried down quite a quantity of drift which was collected against the buttress. The stream parted on either side, leaving comparatively motionless water close to the piles; Franklin swam to this spot, judging from the behavior of the drifting wood that the body would probably be carried against the central supports by the converging of the currents. A man who can without a moment's deliberation jump into an unknown stream at midnight, and then calmly reason and argue for and against his premises, must be decidedly out of the common. His hypothesis was correct, for the body was under the driftwood, as he had anticipated. With frantic desperation, knowing that each second of submersion rendered the work of restoration more difficult, he thrust aside the logs, seized the insensible man by the hair, and, giving himself an impetus into mid-stream, by shoving off from the arch-side with his feet, struck out boldly for the nearer shore. Recent rains had infused a little animation into the Seine, and the current was strong enough to carry him through the bridge as far as the wharf before mentioned. There was a boarded incline to the river, the extremity of which stood more than three feet above the water. This seemed to be the only chance; burdened as he was, he could not hope to











swim down the stream in search of a better landing-place. He kept his head up with some difficulty now, for he was getting fatigued. Neither a ring, nor a stray chain, nor any means of lifting himself and freight onto terra-firma could he find. But help came from a most unexpected quarter. The corpse opened its eyes and revived with a rapidity which was super-human.

"This is a lively predicament I'm in," it remarked.

Franklin started! "Surely I know that voice," he thought.

"If ever I see those fiends in human shape—"

"Look here, Tann," interrupted Elliott; "kindly recuperate out of the water; I'm tired of holding you up."

"Where am I?"

"In Seine—temporarily, I hope."

Tann, who was unable to swim, was a past-master in the art of floating in air, water, or any other element; so he inflated himself and ascended heavenwards to the level of the ground. Then he stretched out his hand to Franklin and pulled him ashore.

"Wait a bit, while I get my coat and boots," requested Elliott; and together they walked up onto the bridge through the rain, which had degenerated from a dull drizzle into a lively downpour. Wet in every garment alike, they stood waiting for a passing vehicle.

"How did it happen?" asked Elliott.

"I cannot tell you," replied Tann; "but I shall have my report to-morrow morning, and I am not committing myself to anything rash when I say that things will be warm for somebody."



## CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH TANN BECOMES AN EQUESTRIAN AND HAS A FALL.

THE reader may fancy that he has detected us in an incongruous absurdity in having our heroine saved, and her parents, whom she had accompanied to the theatre, burned. And it will be well, perhaps, to clear ourselves in the minds of our readers by explaining, as Violet explained to Franklin, how she came to be deserted on the night of the fire.

Mr. Woods was a retired merchant, whose *otium cum dignitate* had its headquarters on Fifth Avenue, New York, four houses from the one in which Franklin's married sister resided. Indeed, Violet Woods and Franklin's sister had been in the same convent together, though Miss Elliott was one of the big girls at the head of the school, and Miss Woods was a little thing, not in double figures.

Violet was close on eighteen when her parents, preparatory to bringing their daughter out in society, deemed it judicious to finish her education by adding a touch of cosmopolitanism. To this end they planned a European tour.

On the second day of their sojourn in Paris a cruel destiny had drawn them to the ill-fated opera house, Her father, in escorting his wife and daughter along the Rue Mirabeau, had encountered an American friend who was going to the opera that evening, and it was more to meet him than from any anticipation of pleasure to be derived from the opera, that they had taken one of the few private boxes spared from the advance sale.

Two yards more between Mr. Woods and his friend,



and the former might have turned into another street and have escaped the rencontre. Had he walked on the sunny side instead of the shady, the Angel of Death would have passed him over, and that other Angel of Love would have lost one of his most agreeable tasks.

In the middle of the third act Violet's mother and father were temporarily occupying the friend's box, she being too entranced with the music to care to accompany them. Then, the panic—and all hopes of being united again on earth destroyed! That was the whole story. And they had been so happy a few short hours before! The air was so fresh and joyous, and the birds were singing so blithely on every bough, as they drove through the Bois! Who could suppose that in one evening the whole fabric of happiness would be shattered?

Franklin learned thus where he had seen her before, and it pleased him to remember how he had admired her in that first glimpse. He was puzzled to know what to do; how to act on her behalf. Her friends and relations in New York had been apprised by cable of the calamity which had befallen her, but some time must elapse before their intentions could be known, and meanwhile he was in a very awkward situation. A young man cannot very well devote his entire leisure to a pretty young lady without conclusions being drawn. Franklin felt this. That didn't help him; but it impelled him to exhibit a reserve and a formality he was far from desiring, and, what was worse, it induced him to curtail the pleasure he derived from being in her society.

On leaving Miss Woods that morning, Elliott went down to the billiard-room to find Sadler. That gentleman had become a perfect lunatic on the game. He could not make the simplest carom, his knowledge of side was less than elementary, and yet he fancied himself an adept.

Franklin discovered him playing with a stranger.



It was the second game; Sadler had won the first by three points, and the unknown offered to play him for one hundred francs, an offer which Tann accepted.

The usual result! Sadler handled his cue once in his lead off, the other gentleman finished the game in one break, so S. A. lost his temper and called his adversary "a low, contemptible cad." Elliott arrived on the scene just in time to prevent bloodshed. He forcibly dragged Tann away in spite of his struggles and wriggles.

"Serves you right," was the only consolation Tann received for the loss of his money. "Nobody but a jay undertakes to defeat a stranger on his own invitation when there's money staked. Besides"—Franklin laughed—"it is owing to your temptations that this man is a nefarious bunco."

"What's a bunco?" interrogated Sadler.

"A bunco is a confidence man, a beguiler of innocents, a bird of prey who masquerades in the guise of a sucking-dove."

"Oh! Well, I didn't tempt him to practice his dishonesty on *me*."

"That being the case, it follows that the devil is not a *moral* necessity."

"Ugh!" grunted S. A. "Some damned understrapper of mine has been prospecting around on his own account; which reminds me, I had an interview with Abaddon last night—he's on the Paris circuit. He's one of my most active imps; often mistaken for me. He explained to me how it was I was set upon and robbed last night. It was his doing, but it seems he didn't recognize me. Ha! ha!" Sadler laughed. "I'm avenged. One of my murderers has killed the other. It was most laughable the way it happened. Abaddon took the pocket-book from the big one's pocket, that's Roger's, and when Pierre, the little one, asked for it he couldn't find it; so he accused Pierre of stealing it. The other retorted hotly, and Roger knifed him. It's most amusing!"



"Pleasant youth, Roger!"

"Yes. He'll never be tried for the murder, though, for his late partner will never be identified. Many a crime is committed in this lovely city which the police never unravel. It's a wicked world! In the midst of life we are in death. Ah, why throw away chances? Isn't it policy to believe in an abode of bliss and a hereafter? for if there be no future state the good man and the bad level up on demise; but if there is, or be—put it in whatever mood you like—then the good man has been on the safe side. Yes—speaking from the point of advisability—if the atheist is right, the believer does not suffer for differing from him; but, if the boot is on the other foot the infidel's chance is an outside one, to say the least. The bias is, therefore, on the side of the credulous idiot."

"Good boy, Sadler!" remarked Franklin. "Go on like that and I'll get you a church in Brooklyn, and you can advertise your homilies a week ahead."

"Bah!" muttered Tann, "I'm an all-fired, pumpkin-headed crank!"

Here he was dilating on the advisability of virtue and faith and other mistakes, when it was his avowed business to propagate the opposite principles. Metaphorically, he kicked himself in forty different places, and vowed never to give himself away again.

"It's too fine a day to stay indoors," said Franklin. "Come for a ride. I've hired a couple of nags for the day. If you like them you can buy them."

Sadler had never been across a horse before in his life, which dated from far back; and, as usually happens in such cases, the animal it was his lot to ride was a vicious, evil-tempered brute.

"I'm thankful there's not a large gathering to see me break this horse in," said Sadler, as the beast wheeled round and round, in obstinate contravention of his wishes.

"Yes, it is as well," agreed Franklin; "but keep your hands well down and he won't throw you."



And ride more with your knees. You depend too much on the stirrups."

"Do I?" shouted Tann, clutching the reins with one hand and the mane with the other. "Oh! it looks quite easy the way you do it, and yet the conviction is forced upon me that I should be a deal safer walking."

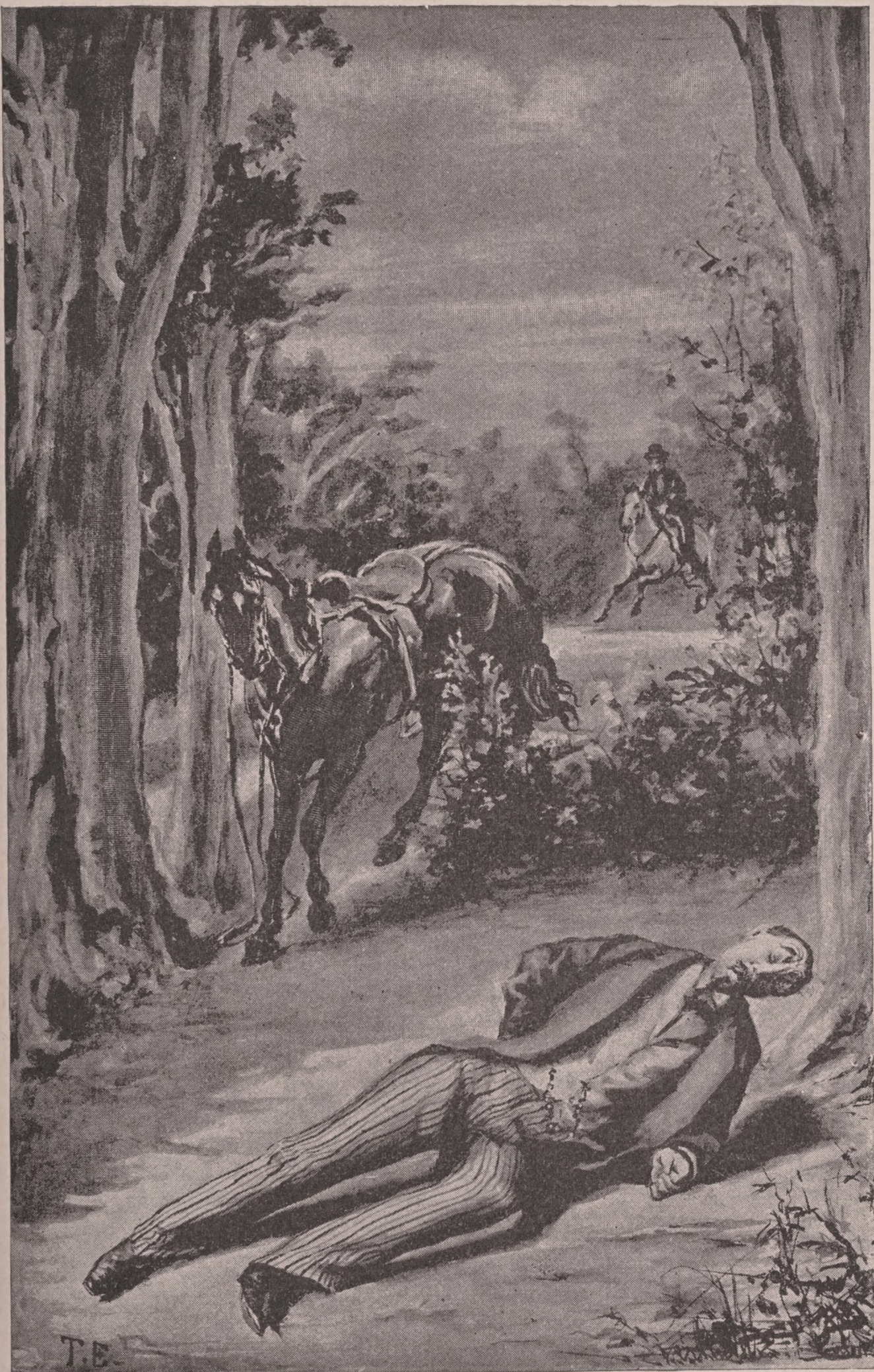
"What's there to be nervous about?" queried Elliott. "You can't hurt yourself—that is to say, you can't kill yourself."

"I ought to be brave under such circumstances," said Tann, as the horse stood upon his hind legs and beat the air with his fore-paws, "but somehow—I'm not."

Sadler A. had foolishly adorned his heels with spurs, which, as the animal resumed its natural attitude, deeply impressed themselves in the horse's flanks. There was a mixed view of man and horse for some seconds—the horse predominating; and then both were flying with the speed of the wind down the road, man on top, Elliott in hot pursuit. Sadler, with a desperate effort, locked his arms around the equine's neck and shouted, "Stop him! stop him!"—in vain. The few pedestrians who were about seemed not anxious to accept the invitation. With head erect and ears laid back, the infuriated beast galloped along as if its life depended on beating a record, and Franklin tailed farther and farther behind.

A turn in the road took Sadler from his sight; but he kept on, and at the corner saw H. S. M. half a mile ahead. Elliott, being an old rider, could venture to spur his steed, which, under the pricking influence, lessened the distance between him and the leader, whose speed was partially nullified by the tortuosity of the course pursued. Suddenly Tann's mount altered its tactics. It stopped and shied at the shadow of a tree. An acrobatic display, in which Sadler was the sufferer, followed. First the horse's





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head was up, then his fore-legs were down, while the hind hoofs beat time to an imaginary fandango; next he left the ground, bunched himself in the air, and spread as he reached earth again.

He stood on his head, and Sadler was upside down; he up-ended and walked about like a biped; and just as Tann was resolving to slide off, he altered his mind and bucked.

That was how the crowning disaster happened.

The "fiery untamed" was walking round on two legs, and Sadler, seeing his chance, dropped quietly off. Unfortunately, the second in which he loosed his hold was the one chosen by the horse in which to reverse his action, and this reverse action caught Sadler in the pit of the stomach.

He came to grass some twenty feet from the colliding spot, and the horse, apparently satisfied with the proceedings, stopped short and began to graze with the utmost unconcern.

Tann's human nature was so broken up that he was too unconscious to summon the supernatural to his relief; he lay, panting and gasping, with four ribs fractured and intense mortification setting in.

Franklin, by this time on hand, dismounted and went to the rescue. A flask of brandy proved useful as a restorative. After a decent interval, sufficient to allow the spirit which had gurgled its way down Tann's throat to operate, the luckless man opened his eyes and groaned.

"That horse seemed to be possessed by the devil," said Franklin, sympathetically and unthinkingly.

"Did he?" gasped Tann. "Well he won't be possessed by this devil. I wouldn't have him at a gift."

"Fortunately," said Franklin, "you can doctor yourself, and I would suggest your setting your ribs right immediately, and we'll turn back."

"I'll walk, if it's forty miles," said Tann.

"It won't be necessary. There's a carriage coming along. We'll ask the occupants to give you a lift,"



And Franklin, hailing the approaching vehicle, to his surprise was greeted by the cheery voice of his friend Harper, whom he had left in Nuremberg.

"Hallo, Frank!" shouted Jack, stopping the coachman. "Who'd have thought to meet you here! Let me introduce my sister, Belle. Belle—Mr. Elliott! What! Tann too?"

"Yes, Tann too!" growled Sadler.

"Belle!" rattled on young Harper, "Mr. Tann! Tann, my sister! Real nice girl, Belle. Aren't you, sis?"

"Don't be silly, Jack," answered Belle. "Your friend seems hurt, Mr. Elliott."

"Yes," agreed Franklin. "He was trying to break a horse; but the horse resenting it, they had words, and Mr. Tann has concluded to relinquish his purpose."

"Exactly! It's a case of the breaker broken. Anyway, I'm all right now, and I'd like to drive back, if you can make room for me, Miss Harper."

"With pleasure!" Belle drew her skirts aside to make room for him.

Sadler, with a sigh of content, fell into the vacant seat. Elliott turned away and laughed immoderately at the idea. If she only knew Mr. Tann as well as he did!

"Will you ride this dangerous creature home?" asked Franklin of Jack, pointing to the untenanted horse.

"Certainly, if Mr. Tann doesn't mind being left alone with Belle."

"Not at all!" said Tann, cheerily. "I'm in heaven where I am."

Whereupon Elliott simply yelled with laughter, and Belle opened wide her eyes and wondered where Mr. Elliott had been reared.

The change was soon completed, and they started back, Jack and Franklin riding close behind the carriage.



"Where are you stopping?" asked Elliott.

"At the Anglais," answered Harper.

"Well," said our new Faust, "I've a favor to ask of you; but I shall have to tell you quite a long story first."

He entered into an account of the burning of the opera house and his meeting with Miss Woods; spoke of her lonely, deserted state, and asked Jack whether his sister Belle would move to the Trans-Atlantique and be a friend and companion for Violet.

"For 'Violet!'" echoed Harper; and, inspecting Franklin closely, he saw enough to satisfy curiosity, and winked his eye. "Belle," he answered, "when she knows the whole story, will be only too pleased to do as you wish, even if 'Violet' is not a nice girl; but, of course, if she's half as nice as you imply, there's no question about Belle's being satisfied. She's got no girl friends here; the boss isn't here, either. Called back to New York on important business; mother went with him. But not wanting to curtail Belle's trip they telegraphed for me to look after her, and I am on the spot, as you see."

This information made Franklin's mind easy. His sole anxiety now was to get back and apprise Miss Woods of the arrangement he was planning for her comfort.

In the earnestness of their conversation Jack and Franklin had dropped behind; but, the difficulty adjusted, they touched their horses up and drew nearer the occupants of the carriage. Belle was laughing heartily at some remark of Tann's, and that diabolical humorist was lying back on the cushions, evidently contented to the last degree with himself. Sadler fancied himself greatly as a story-teller, and the expressive wag of his head showed that he had made a hit in his favorite line.

"You come from Vermont, don't you?" asked Miss Harper, when her laughter had subsided. "You've the strongest accent imaginable!"



"Have I? That's odd, 'cause I don't come from there," said Sadler. "You couldn't guess in a hundred where I do come from."

"I'll bet you a pair of gloves that I do."

"Done!"

"A hundred guesses, mind you."

"Agreed!"

"First guess! Tannville?" queried Miss Harper.

"Hit it the first time," said Tann, with a burlesque sigh. "That's a dozen pairs of gloves I owe you."

"Six and a quarter is my size," said Belle. "It's very funny too," she went on. "I didn't know there was such a place as Tannville, and that wasn't really meant to be one of the guesses."

It was pretty clear they were having a good time in the carriage. Franklin smiled and debated whether it would be considered polite to request a man to go to Tannville, and whether the man would understand if you did.

"Belle!" said young Harper, riding up, "drive with Mr. Tann to the Trans-Atlantique and take rooms there. Elliott and I will take these horses back."

"Are you going to move there?" enquired Belle, in some surprise.

"Um!" answered Jack. "It will be best for all us young people to be together where Mr. Tann can look after us."

"Well! I like that," cried Sadler. "Look after *you*. Yours truly will be too deeply engaged looking after Miss Harper to hustle much for her brother."

"Very good, old 'un!" laughed Jack.

"What d'ye mean by that?" exclaimed Tann, in the first stage of anger. "I will not be called 'old 'un' by you or anybody else on *earth*."

"Tann!" warned Franklin, "don't forget I'm here."

"I apologize! It is Miss Harper I am to be censured for forgetting," replied Sadler, with a bow to Belle.



"Jack was in the wrong," decided Miss Harper, eying her brother with great severity.

He calmly accepted the inevitable fate of fraternity, and slowing his steed, permitted the carriage to roll out of earshot to allow of his enquiring why the term 'old 'un' should have such an effect on Sadler A. Tann.

Franklin in answer shrugged his shoulders and professed ignorance, unless it was that S. A. was touchy on the subject of his age; for, Elliott said, he was a few centuries older than his exterior indicated. Their ways, the carriages and theirs, eventually lay in different directions, so they separated, Jack and Franklin bent on getting rid of their horses. This achieved, they repaired on foot to the Hotel Anglais, where Harper made arrangements for the baggage to be sent over to the Trans-Atlantique. Tann had disposed of the Harpers with excellent care, having secured for their accommodation the best rooms in the house. As soon as Franklin conveniently could, he left Jack Harper and called on Miss Woods, whom he gratified with the pleasing intelligence of Miss Harper's presence in the hotel.

"She," explained Franklin, "is very different from *you*, being what is erroneously supposed to be the type of American girl. She talks freely, laughs heartily, can hold her own with any of the men in bantering, sarcasm, and independence, and lets them know it; loves to have a crowd of dudes dangling round her on the steamer, paying her compliments, and snubs one and all impartially; is a first-class flirt on the surface, but *au fond*—excuse my French—is as true as steel and as good as gold."

"Your description makes me very anxious to know her," said Violet, visibly brightening for a brief instant; "and, Mr. Elliott—I—am very thankful to you for all you have done for me. You are very kind."



"Not half so kind as I should like to be—I mean, there was nothing to do. I should have preferred something really difficult."

"It is good of you to say so," she said, with a faint, scarce perceptible blush.

"Not at all!" Franklin responded. "Words are cheap. Anybody can talk; almost anybody *will* talk; but few perform."

"And you are one of the few?" remarked Miss Woods, turning her eyes full upon him for too fleeting a second.

"I assure you, Miss Woods," said Franklin, while under the thrilling steadiness of her glance his heart doubled its tempo, "I assure you I wasn't fishing for that. Er—" The words came so fast upon him that they tumbled over one another in his throat, and he stammered out, "Shall I ask Miss Harper to come up to you?"

What is the matter with the man?

"If it is not troubling you?" answered Violet.

"Nothing I can do for *you* can be trouble," said Franklin; and with a bow he left her.

"I wonder if she cares for me," he thought, on his way down to the Harpers' suite.

When a man asks himself questions like that, he cannot be in his right state of mind or body. He must be feverish, and suitable for medical experiment. "I wonder if she cares for me."

By this time he was outside Miss Harper's door, but falling again into his reverie, he stood in a picturesque pose of contemplation with a mat for his pedestal as Jack chanced to come along.

"Belle in?" he shouted.

Franklin came to with a start, and remembered that he had forgotten to knock.

"Come in, Jack," said Belle, hearing her brother's voice, and opening the door. "You here, Mr. Elliott?"

"Yes," Franklin replied. "I'd like to introduce you to Miss Woods, if you don't mind."



It wasn't in Miss Harper to mind, even 'if she had been busy; so, with a nod to Jack, she followed Franklin out of the room and up the stairs.

"How d'ye do, dear?" was Miss Harper's greeting to Miss Woods, as if she had been an old acquaintance. "Franklin has told me all about you. Excuse me calling you Franklin, won't you, Mr. Elliott. I guess I've caught it from Jack. Jack's my brother, Miss Woods. Violet's your name, isn't it? Yes! Well, I'll call you Vi, and you can call me Belle. We shall soon be fast friends, I'm sure; that is to say, I shall be the fast friend and you'll be the little Puritan. Don't be shocked. I'm harmless; everybody says so. I'm all bluff. Hem!—an expression of Jack's."

Miss Woods was compelled to smile in spite of herself; she held her hand out to Miss Harper. The hand, soft and pretty as it was, did not prove adequate for that young lady's wants; for she took Violet in her arms and kissed her.

"You're a dear little—you are little compared to me—you're a dear little, wide-eyed creature, and I mean to love you like a sister," said Belle, kissing Violet again.

With a laugh Miss Harper turned and addressed herself to Franklin. "She's not used to demonstrative greetings like mine; but she'll learn to love me in time. Most fellows do."

"It didn't take Mr. Tann long to offer himself up at your shrine, did it?" asked Franklin, slyly.

"Oh!" answered Belle unabashed, "that's nothing. I'm too used to flirtations to think anything of one more or less. I'm waiting for a sincere case of gone-ness, then maybe I'll become a staid, prim old lady. Violet, I'll tell you all about myself, if this long-faced gentleman will kindly quit."

And Franklin, obeying orders, retired, with a firm conviction that though Miss H. was a jolly sort of girl, the other, with her modest brown eyes, her



unobtrusive keenness, and brave bearing under sudden adversity, was his ideal; and, musing thus, he wandered into the billiard-room where Sadler A. Tann was playing; and the gentle Sadler was getting considerably the worst of it.

His temper accordingly was none too angelic, but his spleen vanished as Franklin appeared.

"How are the two girls getting on together?" queried Jack.

"Splendidly!" was Elliott's reply. "They'll make a perfect combination, for they don't clash in any way. Miss Harper is fair, Miss Woods is dark; one's all sparkle and the other's a quiet glow; and that's a good way of putting it."

"I'm anxious to know your paragon, Franklin," quizzed Harper.

"It would be better for you not to," said Franklin. "It's an Atlantic liner to a coasting smack that you'll lose your heart if you do."

"As *he* has," put in Sadler, with an accompanying grunt of satisfaction.

"Ho! ho!" laughed Jack, finishing a break of twenty. "That's how the land lies!"

"I can't quite deny it, and I can't quite agree with it," said Franklin, with a half-sigh.

"No? Well, I can," said Jack. "You give yourself away so beautifully. Heigho!"

"I can't make a shot if you fellows go on cackling like that," broke in Sadler, as he failed to score off an easy leave. "It's no use playing. If I can't have everything quiet, I may as well give up."

"If quietness makes your play better, you'd be a billiard-terror in the Sahara, wouldn't you, eh?"

"Stop now, anyway!" said Franklin. "It's half-past six, and we'd best dress for dinner. If it wasn't for deserting Miss Woods, and for the sympathy which any gentleman must feel, we'd go to a theatre; as it is, we'll try to be happy at home for once."

"Yes," assented Jack; "and if Tann's willing,



we three will have a quiet hand of poker in my room."

"If it's anything to do with gambling, you can't count me in," snapped Tann. "Gambling means drink; nearly all gamblers drink; many of them are drunkards—"

"All through trying to get full hands," interposed Jack.

"I will not encourage viciousness of that kind in anyone I feel an interest in."

"Pooh! This won't be gambling. We'll make it a franc limit, if you're frightened. I suppose Belle will be engaged with Miss Woods most of the evening, or we'd ask her to join us."

"What!" half screamed Tann. "I'm ashamed of you, Mr. Harper, leading your sister into the occasions of sin."

"Sin! what's a sin! Who made you an authority on sin?" asked Harper, rudely, and Franklin was constrained to laughter.

"Well!" shouted Tann, fiercely, "if I don't know what sin is, it's a pity!"

At this point he felt Franklin kicking him, so he remembered himself.

Again that painful habit of saying what it was his interest not to! Of course he knew what sin was, and naturally realized the consequences more than any mortal could, but he should be pleased to see the number of sinners swelling—even if he did think the terms "sinner" and "fool" synonymous.

"Very well! I'll play," he said, attempting to undo the pious injury he had been doing himself. "I was only afraid it would be a children's game with a sou in the pool—or whatever you call it—and nothing riles me more than that."



## CHAPTER VII.

### IN WHICH TANN VISITS AN ART GALLERY.

THE weeks passed by, and the young people, out of respect for Violet, refrained from mixing in the world of gayety; theatres were carefully tabooed; the dances and garden-parties of the early summer avoided; but Miss Woods, feeling that she was curtailing the pleasure of the others, at last insisted that her grief should no longer cast a gloom over the whole party.

Nothing is more injurious than brooding over misfortunes; and yet Mrs. Grundy lays extravagant stress on the propriety of isolation and the nursing of silent grief; but then Mrs. Grundy is a first-class fanatic.

The salon was nearing the end of its successful exhibition, and Belle, at least, was desirous of seeing the celebrated works of the year. Violet, wishing to conform to the boundary lines established for family bereavements, did not care to go. Franklin, of course, politely avowed his determination of staying behind to look after Miss Woods, and the whole plan was likely to fall through, when Violet consented to accompany them.

Picture-viewing is certainly the mildest form of dissipation; it is hardly boisterously out of tune with gravity of disposition, and if there was any harm in Miss Woods yielding to the temptation, we forgive her.

How beautiful she looked in black! The homeliest girls appear nice in black, when it is well made up. A sallow complexion by contrast takes the tint of



delicate paleness, and a naturally pale face derives therefrom a heavy transparency which, in company with wide-opened deep-brown eyes brimming with love beneath the fringe of long, dark lashes, is simply irresistible. What wouldn't we give to have such a face on our left arm!—the owner of such a face, that is. But we grow delirious with envy of Franklin.

Tann, at the outset, assigned himself to the escort of Belle. Belle had impressed him. His opinion of her keen judgment was of the highest. He told Franklin that if Belle Harper had been Eve, he didn't think that a whole tribe of snakes could have induced her to take the apple.

Our first female parent was not an American girl, or she would have regarded that apple deal with strictly business eyes, and have entered it in a ledger, or calculated the probable profit and loss on the transaction, before closing her ivories in it.

"D'ye know," said Tann to Belle, for whom he was clearing a way through the lobbies, "I've never been to a picture exhibition before, though I've been painted in so many ways myself?"

"You a model?" asked Belle, in some surprise.

"Hardly a model," replied Tann, "but artists take fancy pictures of me. I'm represented allegorically as a serpent; sometimes they give me hoofs and a tail, but I answer you on my word of honor I'm not what I'm painted."

"Like a certain party we won't mention," laughed Miss Belle.

"Indeed! who may that be?" interrogated Tann.

"Don't you know the old saying, 'The devil is not so black as he is painted?'"

"Is there a saying to that effect?"

"Yes. It's a horrid chestnut, too."

"Oh!" said Tann, "I'm very much obliged to whomsoever originated it."

Belle laughed merrily at this. Who could have



helped it? Sadler said such innocent, droll things, so much as if he meant them.

"You may laugh," Sadler went on, warming up to his subject, "but I hate to allow such misrepresentation to continue."

"Why should you trouble yourself about His Infernal Majesty?" queried Miss Harper, through her laughter.

"Why?" answered Sadler, recollecting himself, and continuing the discussion in the same tone, though from a more outside position. "Why? It is quite possible that the gentleman you refer to may have business dealings with myself. I presume he is tempter-in-general by contract. Why he should be held up to universal obloquy for merely doing what his nature, his impulsive, guileless nature, prompts him to, I cannot grasp. How would you like to see a friend of yours represented with hoofs, and a tail forked like a serpent's tongue? It's all very well in political cartoons, but this is done seriously. He, I may inform you, is beautiful; his features are forbidding, awe-inspiring, but symmetrical; that is why I consider an injustice is being done. Down with injustice!"

"I'm with you, there," said Belle, "down with it!—but we're blocking the way. Let us look at the pictures. That's pretty! Number 34; '*Le Vieux Matelot*.' Clever study."

"I'm no judge," remarked Sadler. "His face looks to me like a cross between an over-ripe tomato and a slice of corned-beef."

"Exposure to the weather is the cause," explained Belle, amused at his metaphor. "'*La premiere faute*.' That's quaint; isn't it?"

"Don't get on to it at all," growled Sadler.

"Don't you see;" remonstrated Belle, vexed at Tann's dullness. "The little boy has been stealing preserves and his mamma is chastising, or rather has been chastising him. That's why he's crying."



"What rot!" said Tann. "How can they expect the child to grow up wicked if they beat him for a trifle. If a child has leanings to larceny, he should be encouraged. Who knows? he might be in a big position of trust some day."

"Yes," agreed Belle, supporting Sadler's supposed jest, "a cashier or a boodling alderman. Oh! that's real sweet. '*Un vrai ami*.' See! the master has fallen off the horse in the hunt and the poor animal is standing by in sorrow."

"Very, very elegant in theory!" sneered Tann, "but in practice it's about as different as a pie from a paving-stone. The beast has thrown him off and is quietly taking a free grass lunch to show his indifference. I know, I've been there. '*Un vrai ami*!' Pah! it's a misnomer!"

"You're naturally sore on that score!" Belle rejoined. "What's this? '*Le Naufrage*.'"

"That's better," said Sadler. "It's severe. The lightning is very good, and the expression of discontent on the part of some of the people is excellent."

"Look! What beautiful eyes the woman in the corner has!" enthused Miss Harper.

"Which corner?" asked Tann, turning round to survey the room behind them.

"In the picture!" Belle stamped her foot impatiently, thinking Tann was jesting. "She's praying."

"I see! I see!" said Tann; "most absurd habit. I never waste my time in that way! Foolery! She might as well take a comfortable view of things. Oh! I can see you are not with me in this."

"No, I am not," retorted Belle, sharply. "I guess you think it's very manly and modern to neglect a small act of recognition to your mortality, but it's not at all clever. Any fool can deny everything; the negative side of an argument is always the easier. It is the simplest thing in the world to be unconvinced; it is no easy matter to convince."

There was an icy barrier between them for nearly



five minutes. Belle was anxious to thaw, but wouldn't, till Sadler, in his most insinuating voice, said, "Miss Harper, I've been thinking over your last remark and I'm going to begin to-night." He didn't say what he was going to begin. Miss Harper smiled her sweetest—and that was just too sweet for anything—and said, "Yes, think of when you were a child at your mother's knee."

"I never had a mother's knee," said Sadler. "My mother never had a knee."

"What! She must have been a freak."

"I never knew what it was to have a mother."

"Mr. Tann! What a cheerless, unhappy childhood yours must have been!"

"I never remember being a child," commented Sadler. "My first recollections are full-grown ones."

"You are a kind of mystery, Mr. Sadler.—There's a cute picture!" and referring again to her catalogue, she read, "'*Duquel pense-t-elle?*' What is she thinking of?"

"It is a conundrum. I give it up. Perhaps she's thinking her feet are smaller than other girls'. She is apparently eying her shoes."

"Stupid!" said Miss Belle. "The notion of the picture is, that she is thinking of the young man who is looking through the branches."

"The dude behind?" queried Sadler.

"Yes. See how anxious and tender his gaze is! She is rather like Miss Woods, isn't she?"

"Just slightly," agreed Tann.

"By the way, where *is* Violet?" asked Belle.

"On ahead somewhere with Franklin," replied Tann.

"Of course, I knew that. He is very attentive to her."

"Is he?"

"Yes. It's my opinion," stated Belle, "that there's a wedding looming up from that quarter."

"He! wed *her!*"



"Yes; why not? Isn't she a beautiful, sensible, pure girl, and isn't he a nice, manly young fellow, and as honorable as men are nowadays? They are splendidly adapted to each other."

"Are they?" snapped Tann. "Well, I can't see it. I guess I'll have to give Franklin a sound talking to. If he gets married—I get left."

Belle laughed with scorn. "He'll take a lot of notice of what any one says to him on that subject!"

Sadler A. Tann replied naught to this; he had food for thought, and he was busy digesting it. He knew this girl, Violet, to his sorrow. She had been next to perfect; she had never given her parents any cause for anger or dissatisfaction; and he gnashed his teeth as he reflected. Her virtue needed only to be a trifle more obtrusive, or practised in a different sphere, for her to pass muster among the saints. A fine chance he would have of leading Franklin Elliott into the tortuosities of vice, if that self-willed young man had such an incentive the other way as this girl would be! It must be prevented at all hazards. The love sentiment must be nipped in the bud. That's all there was to it, from Tann's point of view. He gnawed the ends of his fingers more viciously than ever; it was his only sign of discontent, with the exception of silence.

Violet, Franklin and Jack Harper had gone on in advance of the other two, and Jack, considerate, knowing youth, had discovered a friend in the crowd. Convenient friend! Franklin liked Jack Harper very much, but there were times when his strongest enchantment was distance. This was one of the times. Mr. Elliott felt relieved when Jack's broad shoulders were lost in the surging crowd. He could look at Violet now without the consciousness that some one at his elbow was appreciating his expressiveness as a good joke.

"The crowd is very great, is it not, Miss Woods?" asked Franklin, glancing down at her pale, delicate-



looking countenance. "Perhaps you will find my arm of service?"

He offered her the use of it, with an entreating smile which a heart of stone could not have resisted with self-complacency. Violet accepted his support very timidly. She scarcely touched the arm with her gloved hand, but the condescension gave him courage, and he drew her closer to his side. This was the first occasion on which he had been so favorably situated; even now, it was the presence of the crowd which gave him the excuse and the courage to put himself forward. The pressure of her hand on his arm thrilled him as he had never imagined it possible that he could be stirred; the strange sensation at his heart seemed to rise, perforce, into his throat, and it required a strong effort to converse naturally. If he only dared give himself over to his passion! But it was better to suffer such repression for a little while longer than risk his future happiness by a premature avowal. Violet found his arm extremely useful; the crush was not nearly so tiresome as it had been. She began to think more of Franklin than she had done; and once, Franklin's gaze being apparently engrossed with a landscape, she concluded to venture a study of his features. She turned her clear, dark-brown eyes full upon him for an instant, and, as if responsive to their magnetism, he moved his head to look at her. She lowered her lids, and blushed so charmingly and guiltily that Franklin longed to take her in his arms before all the people; but he thought, very correctly, that she might object. After this they stood before painting after painting, and neither saw one of them; not that either knew of the other's temporary blindness. Each imagined that the spell of quiet and reflectiveness was confined to himself and herself. What a deal of the game the lookers on must have seen! Contented gravity is as great a betrayer of secrets as the sullen stolidity consequent up on what is technical.



ly known as a "tiff." From room to room they wandered; the hour for luncheon arrived, and the fashionable visitors left, one by one, until but few persons remained; but they failed to notice the falling off. They sat them down to rest, and here Miss Harper and Sadler A. Tann eventually discovered them.

"We've had a nice hunt after you two children," said Belle, amused at the innocence assumed for her benefit. "Do you know it's nearly three o'clock?"

"Is it?" asked Franklin, surprised, and taking out his watch. "So it is!"

"Dear me!" exclaimed Violet, "I had no idea it was so late."

"Yes! Heigho! How time does move when we are oblivious to its flight!" said Belle.

"Or when one is in such charming company as yours," added Sadler, with a grandiose bow.

"Yes, but they," pointing to Franklin and Violet, "haven't been in my charming company, and yet—" Belle laughed.

"Where's Jack?" queried Tann, curtly.

"He met some friends about an hour ago and we—I haven't seen him since," answered Franklin.

Three hours ago would have been nearer the mark.

"Let's go home," proposed Belle. "For, in the first place, I would like lunch; I'm hungry as a polar bear; and secondly I should like to take my diurnal anteprandial slumber. I guess I haven't inhaled the air and the beans of the Hub for nothing. Violet and myself will walk together for a change, and you two boys may walk on ahead."

Sadler A. Tann, a boy! What next?

Belle smiled to herself at the slight expression of dissatisfaction which passed over Franklin's features, because of this new arrangement. Fleeting as a fleecy cloud across the sun, too insignificant to leave its



impress on the day; but for all that it was readily perceived by the watcher.

Belle laughed. "It does the brutes good to suffer occasionally."



## CHAPTER VIII.

### S. A. TANN HAS A DIFFICULTY WITH THE POLICE.

AMONGST other habits common to our frail humanity, Sadler Adams had taken to smoking. In tobacco he found a balm for his injured feelings, a solace for his weighty woes ; he and the "noxious weed" were more inseparable companions than Damon and Pythias, or David and Jonathan were in the by-gone. His mouth was rarely seen without a cigar protruding from its recesses ; in fact S. A. experienced as much pleasure in chewing the end, as in drawing the smoke. He never dreamed of commencing any undertaking without consulting a cigar ; and it was while under the influence of a mild home-grown Havana that he was made the victim of one of his usual misadventures, which were, it would almost seem, the work of some practical joker of his own tribe. Late one evening,—one morning, we might say, for it was nearly 1 A. M.—Sadler sauntered slowly along the Rue de la —, philosophizing on his own cleverness in being able to lead men into the absurdities of crime.

This train of thought was suggested to him by the presence of a man reeling under a heavy load of liquor, bawling a profane song, and occasionally breaking off to ask an imaginary second to stop pushing him.

"There," reflected Sadler, "that's our doing."

As is usual with people laboring under this mistaken idea of pleasure, the inebriate's progress was serpentine, so that in advancing one hundred yards his pedometer would have registered a quarter of a mile. His lurches were of the malicious type ; the few foot-



passengers who appeared to be abroad at this late hour having to dodge nimbly as he bore down upon them with the evident desire to butt them into the gutter.

Sadler saw his performances at a distance; but he gradually approached the intoxicated gentleman, and finally found it necessary either to pace with uncomfortable slowness behind him, or to chance a collision in walking past. He chose the latter alternative. Mr. Drunkard was watching him, it seemed, out of the extreme corner of his left eye and was preparing for a rush. Sadler grew nervous. It was not in his nature to go back, and it was too absurd to fear a helpless brute like this! He would risk it. He advanced with considerable valor, and the gentleman or citizen, whichever he preferred to be called, tottered and oscillated, ready to swoop down on the intruder. Tann halted and his enemy did likewise, with his upper half at an angle of more than 45 degrees. Tann proceeded, and the awful, intoxicated example drew nearer, still more out of the perpendicular. Sadler watched the hesitancy of his adversary's attack and nimbly jumped past, as the man tried to drop up against him. The onslaught and the escape were so simultaneous that the attacking party, not being able to recover, smashed violently into a lamp-post, wheeled sharply round it, and collected in a heap in the gutter. Tann stopped and examined the ruins. It was a well-dressed man, in evening attire. Probably he had left his club in a fairly muddled state, and walking home with the intention of benefiting by the night air, had been accosted and led into some saloon by a siren of the streets, some creature whose artificiality would have caused him to shudder in his sober senses.

Sadler should have known better than stop to criticise the costume and social status of inebriates at that time of night—but he didn't. He even went to the extent of stooping down and attempting to loosen the man's collar, to give him more breathing room. Poor, innocent Tann! The inebriate, taking Sadler's



kindness for aggressiveness, seized him by the coat and yelled at the top of his voice for a policeman. It was in vain Tann implored him not to be a fool, and to let go. A score of night prowlers ran towards them from various directions; Sadler struggled hard to get away, but his efforts were useless; the man held on and Sadler remained where he was. The usual crowd of chance wayfarers soon collected, and a hot altercation between the drunken man and his victim afforded them much amusement.

The cause of the trouble soon became evident; the inebriate had lost his watch. Sadler was accused of the theft. The more anxiety he displayed to get away, the stronger was the general conviction of his guilt. To make the situation more difficult, the man's excitement and fright had almost sobered him, so that it was next to useless for Sadler to protest his anxiety to relieve or assist a fellow-man in liquor. Mr. Tann objected to being searched, and when the crowd good-naturedly attempted to help the robbed man to regain his property, Sadler became violent and abusive. In this *melée*, one watch and chain *did* go—Sadler's own.

When the dispute had lasted some five minutes, a police officer appeared upon the scene and shouldered his way into the crowd. The situation explained, he laid his legal forepaw on Sadler's collar and requested him, in forcible police-French, to "come along without any fuss." Sadler was too excited to follow his good advice; he kicked and struggled, till he burst his sixteen-and-a-half collar and tore the buttons off his vest—all to no purpose. Mr. Sergeant de Ville whistled, and two other officers came to his assistance; and by sheer strength they dragged Tann along to the station, followed by a sleepless mob of a hundred or so, the plaintiff among them. When Sadler stood revealed in the light of the office, he appeared capable of any enormity, while his accuser was, to all intents and purposes, a respectable gentleman. The inspector



asked a few leading questions, which Sadler obstinately refused to answer; and, the gentleman swearing to the robbery, and being supported by two or three others in the crowd, who professed to have witnessed the committal of the offence, ordered Mr. Tann away to solitary confinement for the night. The accuser left his card, "M. Syphon de Vichy," and appointed to appear in the magistrate's court, at ten on the morrow.

The office was cleared of all but Sadler and two of the officers. The absence of any kind of jewelry on Sadler's person simply served to confirm suspicion; for—they, of course, knew the little game—he had passed the swag on to a confederate. The search revealed to Tann that his own watch and chain were gone, and his indignation knew no bounds. But the hotter he grew, the more the officers laughed and praised his acting, which to them was "*superbe*" and worthy of the finest melodrama. Sadler vowed he would appeal to the American consul, and the result would be war between the United States and France; whereat the police laughed the louder. When they had extracted sufficient amusement from the prisoner, they threw him into a comfortable cell, specially designed for such cases as his, and retired, leaving him worn out from his protestations of innocence.

He sat on the edge of the bed, and began to think what a vile, ungrateful world it was. Here he had been behaving in a most exemplary manner, in spite of his opinions, and that did not save him from insult and contumely. He was not such a fool as to tempt people to sin to his, the tempter's, annoyance. No! and he had sent a sharp message of remonstrance to headquarters, forbidding the under-strappers to act in any way likely to inconvenience him, in his terrestrial sojourn. They would not dare disobey him; therefore this concatenation of sin, drunkenness, stealing, and mendacity, with violence, and may be a



few other details had been welded together without interference on his part, or on the part of any of his agents. Whence, then, could it proceed? Either there was a rival establishment, unknown to him, or there was no necessity for his. This problem agitated his mind for a considerable period. He decided to devise some way of extending his business; they were getting too idle below; and this truth also intruded itself on him:—if men, unaided, could behave as he had, to his sorrow, known them to, what might they not do if the infernal agencies could only invent fresh enormities to suggest to them! He would establish a commission to consider the matter.

At this juncture Sadler was aroused from his reflections by an adjacent church clock striking three, and the conviction dawned upon him that he was a fool not to exercise his gift of insubstantiality. How easy it was for him to pass through the walls if he wanted to! And he did want to.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sadler was a late riser the next morning. His human framework was bruised and contused from head to foot; so he took it off and overhauled it thoroughly. When his inspection was finished and the repairs carried out, he dressed himself for the day.

The consternation in the police department surpassed everything that had been experienced before in that line. The doors were locked, the windows barred; there were no signs of bootmarks on the walls, no indications of means of escape, or even attempt of escape—and yet the cell was empty! It simply passed all comprehension; they had locked their prisoner in and he had never been seen to come out—but he *was* out! The official bewilderment at this improvement on the Indian basket-trick was so great that the usual secrecy was not observed. The occurrence found its way into the afternoon papers as “a mysterious escape from prison.”



Sadler was delighted at the panic he seemed to have caused, and at the startling hypotheses given birth to, by the notion of a cracksman who was endowed with the gift of immaterialism; but Franklin, who rightly surmised it was Tann's work, warned him to check a rising boastfulness which might at some future date inconvenience or hamper his relations with liberty, and perhaps necessitate another miracle.

"How are the ladies this morning?" asked Tann, the other topic being exhausted.

"Pretty well. They leave us next week," answered Elliott.

Tann could hardly suppress a smile of satisfaction.

"When did they make their minds up to that?"

"This morning. Miss Woods has received letters from New York, which render it imperative for her to depart as soon as possible."

For the benefit of our readers we will explain the contents of the letters referred to. One was from Violet's Aunt Eveleena, telling her that her loving relations looked forward with joy to her return; that their house was to be her home, and that Leonard sent his dearest regards. Leonard was Violet's first, and only cousin. As she remembered him now, he was a puppy about town, who set up for a model in style and elegance of attire. He was an irreclaimable Anglo-maniac, whose chief delight was in the derision of the "rabble," which he interpreted as admiration. Miss Woods wondered why he should send his dearest regards now, when a few months back he had neglected her as being "too slow, don'ch' know?" The reason for his sudden access of affection was discernible in the other letter. Violet Woods, it appeared therein, was heiress to close upon three-quarters of a million dollars, a sum which she was to enter into possession of in two years time, when she came of age.

This intelligence was an unwelcome blow to Franklin's ambitions. Here was a barrier between them,



—a barrier of half a million! How was that to be removed?

Tann naturally felt a thrill of joy pervade his being at the news. It was no easy matter for him to keep back an expression of gloating.

“So she’s going, is she?” he said.

“Yes, she is going,” said Franklin, sadly; and continuing, as if in argument with himself, “perhaps it’s for the best. I must learn to forget her. She is the heiress to great wealth, and I, although I could get a fortune from you, Tann, could not share such money with her. Unless I can make a pile by trade or speculation, I shall never ask her to marry me.”

“Oh,” queried Tann, “were you thinking of marrying her?”

“Why, what else should I think of?”

“What else?” said Tann. “What else? Well, you beat me, you do indeed, Franklin! What’s the post you assigned yourself? What am I here for? What are we in partnership for? You don’t know your business; you’re a new Faust, ain’t you? Assert your powers of fascination and make her a new Marguerite.”

“That’s what’s in your mind, is it?” asked Franklin, as, seizing Sadler by the collar, he banged his head down on the marble-topped table, till the slab cracked in the middle.

“What are you playing at?” gasped Tann, as his skull struck the table the first time.

“Wait till I’ve finished, and I’ll explain the game in full,” answered Franklin, dragging Tann across the room. He butted his friend’s skull against the mantelpiece, till Sadler, exerting his strength, broke loose from Elliott’s grasp and put the bed between them.

Franklin stood on one side of the bed and addressed Sadler on the other, in his most unruffled tones. “I’ve treated you in this unceremonious manner with an emphatic absence of temper, haven’t I?”



"Temper, or no temper," answered Tann, rubbing his cranium, "the result is the same."

"Exactly," agreed Franklin. "If you had been a man you would have fared worse."

"That is to say you would have gone farther," commented Tann.

"You put it beautifully," said Elliott. "I believe there is a distinct mention in our contract, Mr. Tann, that you undertake always to comply with my wishes."

"There is," said Tann, sadly.

"Well, one of my wishes is that you refrain from sullyng Miss Woods' name by uttering it."

"Very well," consented Tann, "I'll never talk about her again; but I presume you'll admit I am at liberty to lead you into temptation?"

"You are at liberty to try, certainly."

"And I can tempt her, I suppose?" queried Tann.

"If you don't mind wasting your time."

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again," is my motto," recited Sadler, proudly. "My successes are 75 per cent. more numerous than my failures."

"Yes, but one failure worries you more than all the successes."

"That's settled, then," exclaimed Tann. "By the way, I guess you've read 'Paradise Lost?'"

"Yes," said Elliott.

"Do you remember how Milton describes my powers in combating the heavenly host?"

"Yes," answered Franklin, "you behaved very creditably on that occasion, if I remember rightly."

"I did, and that is why I wondered so at your temerity in banging my head about the way you did."

"Took you by surprise, for one thing," said Elliott; "and another thing, you could not resist."

"Why not? why not?" asked Tann, with a snarl.

"Because it would have been against my wishes."

"Damn your wishes!" growled Sadler.



"I expect you'll say that very frequently before I get through with you."

"Franklin Elliott, you are a trickster—a quibbler!"

"I've got the best of the contract, naturally. I'm an American. That's what we call 'cuteness.' This will be an experience for you, Tann. But why grumble? You get the pull at the finish, that's where I suffer."

"I hardly think you're worth the trouble I take over you," said Tann—adding in an undertone, "I couldn't take him home in his present state; it wouldn't do."

"If you are not satisfied, say so, and we'll tear up the agreement at once," proposed Franklin.

"I have not expressed any dissatisfaction," whined Tann; "and I'm the only party with any reason to kick. I've done everything you desired. I haven't left a wish ungratified; my only distress is you don't trouble me enough, and in return you behave like a brute to me. It's ungrateful, Franklin, and it cuts me to the quick. Until you can treat me in a more gentlemanly manner, I shall avoid you." Tann walked hurriedly from the room, slammed the door, and descended the stairs, muttering something to the effect that "the Woods girl would soon be gone: that would be a blessing!"

This last week of happiness flew by at so rapid a rate, that it was with difficulty they realized the nearness of the hour of separation. To-morrow! and in the exuberance of their young spirits the necessary work of to-day was neglected up to the very last moment.

They didn't start to pack their trunks till the night before departure, and it was no easy task, to stow away veritable mountains of finery without damaging their entirety. With a certain amount of help from the willing chambermaids, in whom the call for assistance aroused expectations of remuneration, the trunks were neatly filled, to the owners' delight,



Belle especially rejoiced in no less than ten new toilettes, each of which was more ravishing than the one which preceded it.

The tiresome job was accomplished, and the two girls, drowsy, with their hair tousled and altogether in a disordered condition, were resting—Belle on top of a trunk, Violet in a comfortable rocker.

They made a pretty picture, in spite of the litter of papers and boxes about the apartment. There are still a few girls left who can look presentable when they are not in their war-paint.

As she swayed gently to and fro, Violet turned her thoughts unconsciously to Franklin Elliott, wondering how long it would be before she would see him in New York. He had promised to call, the first thing on his return to his country; but maybe he would forget all about her and his promise too, and Violet sighed.

“Tired?” asked Belle, looking up from her task.

“No, only thinking,” answered Violet.

Belle smiled and hid her face. She had not quite given up all hope of an engagement between Violet and Franklin, though the time was getting short.

“We shall have a good passage, I think,” said Belle. “August is a good time to cross. We shall be in New York at the beginning of September and then it won’t be long before the round of pleasure commences.”

“I shall not go out this winter,” said Violet, thinking of her recent loss.

“No? Never mind, dear, I’ll look after you and see you don’t mope. You must stay a month or so with me. Pa’ll be glad to see you. I rule the house; everybody does exactly what I want. They’re pretty slow at home now without me. I don’t fancy I’ll come over next year. I like Americans better than these Frenchmen; their politeness is so frothy.”

Belle rattled on at her usual breakneck speed, and Violet did not hear a word she said.



By and by there came a knock at the door, and Franklin and Jack entered with a pile of novels.

"Nearly finished?" asked Jack.

"Yes," answered Belle; "one of the maids can fix it now."

Franklin placed the books on the dressing-table and withdrew to one side, to the mantelpiece (reliable stand by), and watched Violet, thinking he did so unknown to her. He had his back to the light and his face was in darkness, otherwise his eyes and whole expression would have revealed a grave tenderness, totally unusual in his easy, unruffled temperament. Violet felt his gaze although she did not turn to discover it, and her ears burned and her face flushed uncomfortably; but she did not dare look up.

"You girls have to get up at eight to-morrow morning, so we'll leave you to retire early." It was Jack who made this thoughtful remark.

Franklin pulled himself together and forsook the support of the mantelpiece.

"Good-night, sis," said Jack, kissing his sister. "Good night, Miss Woods," shaking hands with her, and he went to the door and opened it. Elliott followed his example more slowly and less cheerily. "Good night, Miss Harper." Good-night, Miss Woods." She gave him her hand, and taking it he glanced at her face, and apparently saw sufficient encouragement to hold her fingers longer than was absolutely necessary. She felt the pressure and turned her head away slightly, as though to repress a tell-tale flush; and he repeated his good-night more gravely than before. The door closed on the two gentlemen and Belle effusively kissed Violet. Why?

"Franklin, old man!" said Jack, with affectionate solicitude, in the passage outside, "take my word for it, it will all come right."



## CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH THREE OF THE DRAMATIS PERSONÆ SHAKE THE DUST OF EUROPE FROM THEIR SHOES; AND SADDLER TREATS FRANKLIN TO AN AERIAL FLIGHT.

LE HAVRE is probably familiar to most of our readers, from the illustrated advertisements, representing a huge steamer leaving an elegant quay, whose surface is tastefully decorated with sorrowing friends and young trees. After Paris, glorious in its abandon, happy in the glow of summer, joyous in the cooling breezes of night, Le Havre does not greet one with that impressiveness promised by the guide-book. Not that it matters. The seaport is only a convenience ; it is a step in the right direction—west.

*La Bourgogne*, the Compagnie-Generale-Trans-Atlantique's fast liner, was due to leave the dock at two P. M. Our travellers had ample time to stroll through the town, and they elected to do so ; and although it would have been more correct for Jack to have piloted her, who, had she possessed a brother, would have been another fellow's sister, rather than his own sister, Belle compelled him to remain at her side.

Franklin Elliott's recollections of Le Havre, as a town, are of the vaguest ; all he remembers is that he had a dainty figure close to his side, and that, somehow, he bordered twenty times on saying something, which in the end remained unsaid.

"I may write to you, mayn't I?" begged Elliott, with an earnestness in his voice, but in the impassive manner necessary to the surroundings of a busy street.

"Why should I give you my address, if not?"



"That's very true!" said Franklin, absurdly and illogically. The idea of saying "that's true" to a question!

His next remark, however, was more sensible; for, taking her implied consent for a basis, he observed, "I shall write often."

"Thank you," from Violet. "I shall always be pleased to hear from you."

"You are so kind I don't think I shall be able to stay away from New York very long."

"Why?"

"Well," responded Franklin, "New York will have greater attractions for me now than it ever had before. You'll be there right along, won't you?"

"According to present arrangements, yes," answered Violet, ignoring the connection between Franklin's last two sentences.

They walked on after this for about a hundred yards without speaking. Franklin felt time was fleeting and yet there was no sort of understanding between them.

"I'm sorry this walk can't last much longer," he said. "We're near our destination now."

"Yes," agreed Violet, "and to-morrow at this time I shall be four hundred miles away."

"Or more," added Franklin. "I'm sorry now I didn't decide to go with you."

"So am I," said Miss Woods, readily.

"You! You sorry I'm not going?"

"Yes; why not? Shipboard is very slow and almost anybody is a welcome relief."

"Oh!"

"Yes; and if almost anybody is a welcome relief, how much more a friend like yourself, Mr. Elliott!"

"Oh!" in a different tone. "I'm sure I shall find myself thinking of you whenever I look amongst my art treasures and see your picture, with its mournful eyes—"



"Do you think I have mournful eyes?" interrupted Violet, smiling.

"Yes; I'd rather see you miserable than anybody else I know."

"That's not a very kind wish."

"I meant to say, that when you are unhappy you look sweeter than other girls do when they are laughing; and I shall never forget how collected you were when in danger."

"And how can I ever show my gratitude to you?"

"Gratitude is very unsatisfactory to me. It is a claim forced on one by events. I should like to have a claim on you—but not that of gratitude. I'm only a sort of an adventurer, after all; and if after a year of excitement and travel, I return in my present state of mind—I—I—shall not have altered."

"In whatever state of mind you return, Mr. Elliott, I shall always be glad to meet you."

Her voice sank almost to a whisper; there was a bewitching stress on the "I," and her utterance of "glad" was the sweetest thing in articulation. Franklin thought so and was moved to more fervent utterances; but they had arrived at the dock and in the bustle of preparation for departure, the golden opportunity was lost.

Belle and Jack were already on board and beckoning them from the upper deck. An army of porters were struggling under heavy trunks and portmanteaus, and stacking the baggage in great heaps on the deck. Another set of men were busily engaged in reducing the heap by lowering the different articles into the hold. Franklin carefully pioneered Violet through the maze of boxes, coils of rope, and swearing foreigners, and they soon joined their friends above.

"The girls are very comfortably located on the far side of the saloon," said Jack. "Some people like to



be more in the centre, but I think it's better forward, where you don't get the jar of the machinery."

"We'll have a great time," observed Belle, joyfully. "The vessel is full. I've seen two or three people I know, already. There's a Boston friend of mine who is just splendid; a regular blue-stocking. She's a perfect circus. She'll probably lecture on the 'Unseen Life of the Ocean,'—"

"Meaning the people who don't leave the state-rooms," interposed Franklin.

"Wonderful the way those fellows dodge past each other on that narrow plank, isn't it?" remarked Jack Harper.

"Yes," said Franklin. "It's about as broad as a political party platform."

"Any messages for New York?"

"Nothing much, except I've about three thousand dollars I want manipulated on the street. I'll arrange with you by cable to invest it for me in whatever your paternal bull may think best."

"Good!" said Jack, "I'll—"

"No, hold on!" interrupted Franklin. "I've a friend whose advice on stocks would be equal to a guarantee; but he must be carefully handled. If I asked him directly for information, he wouldn't give it, but I'll play him lightly and cable instructions across as often as I think wise."

Franklin positively felt happy at his latest idea. With a fair start of \$3000 he could become a millionaire in a year, or even in a month, and Tann perhaps not a bit the wiser.

The pandemonium on the quay increased every minute: the hurry-skurry and shouts of the porters, the officiousness of the neatly-attired stewards, meeting the passengers, enquiring their numbers, and seizing on their hand-baggage; the yelling of orders by the officers, and the clanking and creaking of the crane, all showed the moment for departure to be close at hand.



"I guess I'd better be going," said Franklin, with a sigh ; but it was another five minutes before he offered to move.

"I hope you'll have a favorable passage; and when you get home think occasionally of the poor exile," and he smiled in his sickliest manner. He didn't feel like smiling.

"Good-bye, Miss Harper."

"Good-bye, Mr. Elliott." Belle gave him a hearty shake of the hand, and became a trifle tearful; for she was very fond of Franklin, in a sisterly way.

"Good-bye, Jack, good luck to you!" A friendly grip, and Franklin turned, last of all, to the one he would remember most. "Good-bye, Violet," he said, not observing that he had used her christian name. "Good-bye, and God bless you!"

Violet smiled with the pleasure he had unconsciously caused her, and taking his proffered hand, said very shyly and sadly, "Good-bye, Franklin." Dear girl! she was not to be outdone in tenderness at the moment of farewell. She allowed Elliott to hold her hand, until the length and impressiveness of the ceremony attracted attention, and she looked up and met his glance. If ever a man saw encouragement in a maiden's eyes, Franklin did then. He took off his hat gravely, bowed to his friends, descended the steps to the lower deck and crossed the gangway to the wharf.

There he stood, watching the bustle, and the final packages being carried across, and every now and then turned his eyes upwards to the saloon-deck and his heaven.

Jack and his two charges stood leaning over the rail, smiling at him cheerfully. The girls held their handkerchiefs in their hands, to be in readiness to wave them on departure; but they used them at short intervals to take little pieces of grit out of the corners of their eye-lids, while Jack winked down to Franklin to call his attention to the blissful fact.



All the baggage was now on board, and most of it out of the way; the few passengers who had lingered on shore to the last, had walked up the gangway and were pacing the decks above, smoking, and thoroughly enjoying themselves. Quite right! In a few hours, perhaps, their appetites for smoking, as for everything else, may have departed; they may be lying on their deck-chairs, sallow and bilious. Warning bells are again sounded, and the dock-hands at length unhitch the large cables and throw them to the sailors on the steamer. The water seethes, bubbles and flows white from the beating of the screw, and the huge ship slowly leaves the side of the wharf. The usual waving of handkerchiefs begins, long before there is any necessity for it; but big as is the ocean-racer, it diminishes its huge proportions with distance. The figures of the people on deck, to ordinary eyes become blended into a confused mass; but Franklin believes he can still distinguish the small form he loves. He sees the handkerchiefs waving, and flatters himself that by this time the girls are really crying. He summons up courage enough to kiss his hand. Some other girl replies, thinking, of course, that he is some other fellow.

Smaller and smaller grows the steamer to his gaze, and he catches a last glimpse of her, swinging round and making for the open sea.

With a final sigh, he turned round to take his departure inland, and there, grinning sardonically, stood Sadler A. Tann, looking more like himself than Franklin had ever seen him. "You here?" he said, curtly, and with undisguised aversion.

"Yes; aren't you glad to see me?"

"That is a very unnecessary question; you know that seeing you does not affect me in any way, good or bad."

"Not good or bad, but indifferent. Hey?" chuckled Sadler. "She's gone. We shall be much jollier now."



"Shall we?" sneered Franklin; "I'm sorry to hear you have not been jolly in the past. What train did you come on?"

"I didn't come by train at all," replied Tann. "I walked."

"You did the best walking on record, then?" laughed Franklin.

"I was exactly a minute and a half, by my chronometer. I didn't hurry, but I had no misadventures, strange to say. It's wonderful," he proceeded, "the number of mishaps I've experienced since I became a man. I took on this mortal frame to experience the usual pleasures of mortality, but I've had a much larger percentage of miseries. All the time I've been with you, *you've* never had any disasters. *You* never get knocked on the head and robbed, or kicked by an iron-clad horse, or locked up, or dropped into a dirty, slimy river, do you?"

"Not that I'm aware of," said Franklin.

"Well, then, where's the fun of it?"

"Here," answered Franklin, pointing to himself. "I enjoy your mishaps immensely."

"Do you? I don't see why *I* should come in for everything."

"You're so young and innocent, my friend. You'll grow out of it in time," and Franklin could not resist laughing at the satanic one's woe-begone visage. "Well, I'll leave you," said Tann, suddenly. "As you're still so disagreeable, I'll leave you and get back."

"To Paris?" interrupted Franklin.

"Yes. I didn't bring even a tooth-brush with me."

"Could you take me along?"

"I could, but you wouldn't like it."

"Why not? It would be a novelty."

"I shall have to make you invisible."

"How will you do that?"

"That's my business. You are now invisible!"

"I am?" said Franklin. "That's good! very clever!"



But I'm still tangible, I perceive. I can feel myself."

"Of course. If you were intangible you could do the journey as quickly as I do. You cannot possess intangibility until after death."

"So," questioned Franklin, "if anybody were to run up against me now, they could not go through me?"

"No," answered Tann. "They would be compelled to go round."

"When do we start?"

"Right now. Get on my shoulders."

"No," said Franklin, "pick-a-back's the best."

He got upon Sadler's back and locked his feet together in front.

"A very curious phenomenon this, Sadler!" exclaimed Franklin. "Here I am, to all intents and purposes, sitting on nothing. It's well worth making a note of."

"Ready?" questioned Tann.

"Yes," answered Franklin, "go ahead!"

Tann rose from the earth.

"Wait a second," said Franklin. "Take things slowly; I should like to see the country." Sadler did as desired.

"Fly a bit to the north; I want to see *La Bourgogne*. Go on! no hesitation!"

Sadler, being under contract, did as he was ordered. Franklin saw the vessel again, but the girls were below. Jack was on deck, however; so they stopped close to him, and Elliott whispered in his ear, "Take good care of Violet."

Jack started, and dropped his cigar overboard. He marvelled whence the sound proceeded, as he saw no one near him; and made a mental resolve to lay the occurrence before the Psychological Society when he reached New York.

"Home!" said Franklin to Sadler, as if the latter were the regular coachman; and they turned from the ocean and sped over the land at express speed.



"Fifty miles per hour will be quite sufficient," remarked Elliott. Sadler slowed up.

"This reminds me of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," said Franklin. "Did you know a fellow named Dædalus?"

"Yes," answered Tann; "a gol-darned idiot he was, too."

"He wasn't a myth, then: there was some truth in the story?"

"Yes," growled Sadler. "He invented a flying-machine, and threw himself off from a high tower one afternoon to try the effect. He was collected a hundred yards away, and the machine was sold for old iron."

"All the rest is poetical exaggeration. He didn't get too near the sun?"

"No! too near the earth!" replied Tann.

"And all that bosh about his son Icarus and the wax wings was Ovid's invention?"

"I suppose so; I never read it," was Tann's reply.

"What city is this we're going over now?"

"Rouen," answered Tann.

"Are you tired?" asked Franklin. "Because if you are, we can rest on this chimney-stack."

There was a high factory chimney close to them. Sadler—not that his spiritual nature was weary—descended to the chimney, and they seated themselves upon the edge, almost in the midst of the smoke.

Franklin was careful; not being a steeple-jack he did not throw away chances. The height was enormous, and looking down the dead level of bricks made the altitude appear even greater. There were little dots moving in the yard below—workmen no doubt. Sadler was sitting on the north side of the chimney, boasting of the speed with which he had changed from the immaterial to the material, when a sharp gust of wind played round the flapping sides of his coat and destroyed his equilibrium. He fell headlong, backwards, down the chimney in the midst of the dense smoke.

Franklin was so horrified that he tightened his grip



on the lightning-rod beside him, but did not attempt to pry into the black, sulphurous depths. In less than three minutes Tann was by his side again, sooty, grimy, and scorched in several places.

"I was compelled to work a miracle, and have the fire extinguished."

In fact Franklin had noticed a cessation of the smoke.

"That," continued Sadler, "is the smartest thing I've ever done."

"What, falling down that shaft?"

"No! working that little surprise on the factory. I fell so fast that I was in the fire before I had time to express a wish; but you can bet your boots I wasn't there half a second before I was out again."

"You'll have to manufacture a new body if you damage the one you have much more."

"That's what I'm thinking. This one won't last the season out, if I am not careful. They're in a fearful stew below; that is what delayed me. This fire isn't supposed to go out night or day, and here it is out, pop! without any reason. It's funny."

"Yes? just light it again, and we'll start."

"Very well," said Sadler, and the smoke again issued from the chimney.

Franklin bestrode his companion's back once more and they launched themselves off the tower. This time they made a longer flight, at an elevation of about a hundred feet or so from the ground. A swallow ran full into Franklin in its course, so there was no doubt as to his invisibility. Sadler was moving at such a terrific rate that he went through a flock of clamorous crows, not being able to check his speed in time to avoid them.

"Don't do that again, please," shouted Franklin. "Very nearly had my eyes pecked out by accident. Some crow trying to follow an insect into my eye, I guess. Where are we now?"

"A village of no importance."



"I can see that," said Franklin. "It's pretty, though. Let's go down!"

They descended into a small country churchyard and sat down on a tombstone. Franklin felt so eminently peaceful that he drew out his cigar-case and treated himself and Tann to a smoke. It was about four in the afternoon,—a beautiful August afternoon, with a hot, blazing sun up above. But where they were, in the shade of the elms, it was cool and pleasant.

Tann smoked and moralized. Elliott puffed ont blue wreaths, which reminded him of the smoke of the steamer, and of the treasure fast putting distance between her and himself. He wandered among the graves, for Tann had dozed off into a sonorous sleep, which, however, did not interfere with his smoking.

There was a group of three near a new-made grave; evidently a poor widow with her two children, both toddling little mites, one scarce able to walk. The young ones were playing about merrily, plucking daisies from the grass and bringing them proudly to their mother. If Violet were in his place, thought Franklin, she would be sitting down in cheerful conversation with that poor woman in a minute; she would relieve her, and would steal away, as if ashamed of her charity. Of course he couldn't sit down and talk to a strange woman, but he might give way to his compassionate impulses for the dear one's sake. He approached and gave one of the children a handful of gold coin—all he had on him in fact—and then ran for all he was worth to Tann.

"Come on! let's be off," he said.

Tann, seeing there was urgency, took up his burden and sailed away, asking what was the matter as he went.

Franklin partly explained, and Sadler was so displeased that he had serious thoughts of dropping Elliott. A second's deliberation convinced him that Franklin's demise on top of a worthy action would



not prove profitable to him, especially as the contract would be broken by the fall.

"This reminds me of the 'Arabian Nights,'" said Franklin. "Some fellow, I remember, was lifted out of bed in the night and dropped at the gates of Bagdad. Was it Bagdad?"

"How am I to know!" replied, Tann, savagely, "I've had no time to waste reading fairy tales."

"What a useful spy you would make in war time, Tann," said Elliott. "I never thoroughly realized the advantage of invisibility till I saw you, that is, till I knew you. With such a power, I should say any dishonorable man could commit almost any enormity, without fear of detection."

"Why, of course I can work all that for you," said Tann, eagerly. "You've only to give the enormity a name."

"I'll think about it, Tann," said Franklin, with a laugh. "There's no hurry; don't snap at me like that."

By this time they were over the chimney tops of Paris. Sadler descended in one of the squares, and Franklin alighted, and they walked up to their rooms and resumed their visibility. After a wash and a general cleaning up, Franklin made his way to the dining-room and went through the usual routine of courses, without knowing what he ate. His soul was far away.



## CHAPTER X.

IN WHICH S. A. TANN COMMENCES THE ASSAULT, AND IS  
REPULSED WITH CONSIDERABLE LOSS.

WHILE *La Bourgogne* steamed its way across the Atlantic, which was as calm and unruffled as a wayside pool, Franklin and Sadler gave themselves up to the pursuit of pleasure. Paris is at all times a vast whirlpool of gayeties and distractions, and to a stranger, the whirlpool in the summer months perhaps appears most violent in its gyrations.

Hundreds of his countrymen make this airy, frivolous city their temporary summer abode, and Franklin, being a man who was always increasing an already large circle of acquaintances, found his hands full. Sadler A. Tann, too, picked up acquaintances; how, when and where Elliott could never guess. Sadler, it was evident, had the entry everywhere. He never paid to go to any place of amusement, be it picture-gallery, garden or theatre. He was a recognized deadhead.

Even at the low-class dancing resorts, where women of loose joints and flexible morals performed feats that might be termed acrobatic, the attendants seemed to know and pass him unquestioned, and Franklin sometimes wondered if he didn't run the places himself. They were on the way now to a little village down the Seine, and Franklin was asking himself if the boatmen and waiters and hotel-keepers would show him the same familiar deference, when Tann called out,

“Here we are!”

The train drew up at a small station, and the



pair got out and walked up a dusty road to a little inn by the river side.

"By the way," said Franklin, as they were nearing their destination, "who are these people I am invited to meet on this water party?"

"They're all right," answered Tann, shiftily.

"Yes? Well, I didn't ask what was the matter with them, but who they were."

"Two fellows and four girls."

"That's a pretty answer! I supposed they would be of two sexes. Are they respectable?"

"Respectable! The fellows are of the best families in Paris."

"And the ladies?"

"The ladies stand pre-eminent in their own circle."

"Umph!" said Franklin. He saw through Tann's quibbling. It was another plan to get him entangled with some disreputable women. It was as clear as filtered daylight. Before he, S. A., could really sink him, Franklin, in iniquity, it was necessary to provide the *femme* to be *cherchez*. Tann was not such a fool, after all; he attacked men through their weaknesses. But Franklin was all the more on his guard.

"They're here before us!" shouted Sadler, as half a dozen figures came out on the rickety balcony of the inn.

"*Comment ça va, Monsieur Tann?*" hailed one of the girls at the top of her voice.

"*Tres biongi!*" screamed Tann, with a palpable desire to be funny; and the party above expanded its assortment of lungs in loud, meaningless laughter.

"Come down," continued Tann, "and I'll introduce my friend."

"You come up," replied one of the beauties.

"No, come down," said Tann. "You might as well; you've got to, any way. I guess you can't row up there."



There was a fluttering of skirts and a renewed attack of giggle, and the balcony was vacated.

"I'm in for a brilliant afternoon with these frothy, brainless creatures," thought Franklin. Nevertheless, he resolved to conquer his aversion and make himself as pleasing as he could.

The two gentlemen and the ladies soon joined them; and Tann had his hands full introducing them to Franklin, who of course expressed himself delighted to make their acquaintance. Oh, these falsehoods of convenience! The double quartette walked down to the river banks, where lay their boats, each ready equipped with the implements of aquatic motion, and with what was more important, well-stocked luncheon baskets.

Franklin found himself seated in the boat beside a very pretty blonde—such a pronounced blonde as to create doubts on the ground of naturalness; but the effect was pleasing to the eye, and if "Julie" had never opened her mouth, Franklin would have admired her as one does a lifelike painting.

The tête-à-tête arrangement was Sadler's idea. That *unworthy* had insisted upon assigning one lady to one gentleman; but the agreement was, that however they might be separated, all were to meet at the inn at from seven to half-past.

The four boats started off in straggling order, and Franklin, who did not quite see how he was to entertain the lady conversationally the whole afternoon, especially in the Gallic tongue, proposed that they should row a race to some place lower down the river.

The idea was seized on with avidity; but the others did not fancy exerting themselves for sport alone and a prize of some kind was demanded. Whereupon Julie, with a shy, modest glance at Franklin, took off her bracelet and offered it as the guerdon of prowess.

"The gentleman who wins it will give it to the lady he loves best." That's what Julie said, and her eyes











glowed at Franklin, who laughed and wondered what he should do with it—if he won it.

The boats drew up in line, side by side, Franklin on the west, Tann next him, and the two other gentlemen beyond; Armand du Something adjoining Tann, and Justin on the east bank. There was an islet about two miles down, which would be a suitable goal. Whoever got there first was to find the place for luncheon.

Franklin made up his mind not to win. He did not want to be troubled with the young gusher's bracelet.

"None of your supernatural business, Tann," remarked Franklin, jocularly, as they waited for the signal to go. It was a few minutes to two, and the first stroke of the hour on a distant spire was to start the race. How slowly the time passed! The girls grew impatient, and fidgeted uneasily with the rudder lines; and Julie brought to bear her whole stock of oglings and lip-pursings, fascinating shivers and quivers, and little shrieks of child-like dismay, at which Franklin smiled. Julie fancied she was making an impression, and she already looked upon him as a "protector." The few minutes' suspense seemed like an hour, and the perspiration began to flow even before the exertion began. At last the brazen bell struck the hour, and the oars dipped into the water almost simultaneously, Tann dashing off in the lead, with the short, choppy strokes of a novice. Justin was next, a yard or so in advance of Armand, and Franklin brought up the rear. If he wished to make an effort, it would be more likely to be successful when there should be room to pass his opponents. Justin pulled a very fair stroke; Armand was very little better than Tann, and Franklin, who had rowed in the Yale eight, knew he could win easily if he tried.

However, he was not trying, and he soon dropped about three boat-lengths behind Armand.



Julie was in distress. "Oh, Monsieur Franklin, my dear, I shall lose my bracelet!"

"Didn't you expect to?" asked Franklin, secretly amused.

"Mon Dieu! No! It is worth five hundred francs."

"Mercenary little beast!" thought Elliott.

"I thought you looked so big, and strong, and good-natured that you would win it for poor little Julie." She was acting; she wrung her hands in distress, opened wide her pretty eyes till they were positively pitiful and drooped the corners of her mouth, as if preparing to cry.

"Fine comedy!" commented Franklin, mentally. Her simulated fright was positively artistic.

"Dear Mr. Elliott, do win my pretty bracelet for me!" she pleaded.

"I don't know that I can," answered Franklin.

"Do, and I will do anything for you, I will, indeed!" she exclaimed, piteously.

"You'll have the boat over, if you don't pay more attention to the steering," said Franklin, brusquely.

By this time they had gone about half a mile, and Tann was showing weakness. Justin had passed him, and was leading two lengths. Armand was three behind Tann, and Elliott three behind the rear-most. Justin was gaining at every stroke, and his lady friend was already gloating over Julie's annoyance. A bend of the river hid the leader from Elliott's view, and Julie's agony knew no bounds. Even then Franklin would not have exerted himself, but very unwisely Justin made a national question of the race. He had so long a lead that he took off his hat and shouted: "Vive la France! a bas l'Amerique!" after which taunt he rowed with all his strength, meaning to win by half a mile, if he could. The words barely reached Franklin's ears; but they sufficed. With the long, steady stroke of the practised oarsman he settled down to his work, and the boat glided through the water, which gurgled at the bows.



The regular click of the oars in the rowlocks inspired Julie with frantic joy, and she waved her handkerchief excitedly; but Franklin damped her ardor, by saying,

“You’ll be more useful steering than cheering.”

He passed Armand, who was gaining on Tann, and smiled encouragingly at the young Frenchman, with, “You’ll be second, if you persevere.”

Next he attacked Tann, who redoubled his efforts as he heard Elliott approaching. There was a sharp conflict for a few seconds, but Sadler caught a crab and his opponent slipped by.

“Good-bye, Sadler,” shouted Elliott. “Meet you again at luncheon.”

Now came the contest. Justin was nearly twenty lengths in front, and that was a formidable advantage. Franklin, rowing thirty-two to the minute, powerful, muscular strokes which forced the bow clear out of the water, bore down upon his Gallic adversary. Justin saw him coming, set his teeth and pulled a faster stroke. For about a minute he appeared to gain; but the effort failed to last and the sweep of his oars slackened. There was no “beef” to back up his exertions. Franklin did not hurry. He was experienced in boat-races, and he was an excellent judge of pace. Inch by inch he drew upon the leader; there were soon only two boat-lengths of daylight between them. Justin gamely attempted another spurt; he gained a length and lost it. Franklin rowing well within himself, came still closer. There was now only a length between the boats. A watcher on the bank would have known that the race was virtually over, but Franklin, shamming weariness, Justin fell into the trap and worked desperately to tire his opponent out. With each spurt his stroke grew feebler.

Franklin was there, with the bow of his boat level with Justin’s rudder. He could not shake him off. The stern chase may be long to the chaser, but it is death to the chased. The monotonous noise of the oars



exasperated Justin to frantic endeavor; but he continued to grow weaker, until Franklin was unable to stay behind any longer. They raced bow to bow for some time; then Justin, with a gasp, dropped his arms, thoroughly exhausted. The poor young Frenchman had no notion how slowly he was moving now. Even the others were coming up to him, bad oarsmen as they were. He thought not of them, for Franklin was still pretending exhaustion.

His spirit was wonderful; he still went on, making spurt after spurt, but Franklin was not to be caught again. The island—the winning-post—heaved in sight, three quarters of a mile ahead, and Justin made a final and useless attempt. What with the exertion and the heat and intensity of mortification he fell in the bottom of the boat in a half faint. Franklin backed water, fastened his defeated foe's boat to his own and towed it along, adding insult to injury.

Julie was in raptures; but for a fear of upsetting the boat, she would have flung her arms around the victor's neck and kissed him.

Now the other rowers, seeing Elliott with a cargo attached, tried their utmost to come up; but though the work was a trifle harder than defeating Justin, he kept his lead to the end. Within a quarter of a mile of the island, he cast Justin loose and rowed in alone, two hundred yards ahead; Armand second, a length in front of the reviving Justin, and Tann last. Elliott grounded his boat and helped Julie out; she ran into the thick wood of the island, saying: "Get your prize," and waving the bracelet at him. Franklin, puzzled at first what to do, felt bound to follow her; so he gave chase and finally caught her. She turned sharply round, fell into his arms, and lay there panting after her run, and laughing musically.

Julie was a bewitching little siren. She put her plump arms round his neck and said, "You dear, good fellow," and kissed him once, twice, maybe oftener. They were quite alone in the leafy gloom—



not that Julie was particular; she hugged Elliott closely to her, and he was decidedly embarrassed. But he unclasped her arms, and said,

"Come on, the others will be looking for us."

"Oh, they won't trouble," remarked Julie, with her wickedest look, and Elliott said to himself that Tann was a cleverer devil than he had given him credit for. Fortunately he was on his mettle.

"You must know this is a decidedly awkward situation for a gentleman."

"It's awkward for the lady, too," retorted Julie, with a pout. "But I don't mind it," and she took his hand again and pressed it fiercely, sidling up to him, like a child wishing to be petted. Franklin did not know how to crush this young person and retain his politeness; it was difficult, very difficult. It was equally so for her to flirt without assistance. Recognizing this fact, she grew angry.

"You don't seem to like me," she said, looking down on the ground, and ready to burst into tears.

"Oh, yes," answered Franklin, "I guess you're all right—of your kind. But," he added, under his breath, "it's a very bad kind." He wondered what his modest Violet would think, if she saw him in this compromising situation. Would it count in his favor that the lady did not object to being compromised?

"Come!" said Elliott, somewhat roughly, shaking his hand free from her grasp, "let's get back."

This conversation took place in shorter time than it requires to write it. Franklin started to walk back, and Julie, looking as black as thunder, and fidgeting uneasily with the bracelet, walked by his side. She, one of the prettiest of her class, was unused to such treatment. She hated her victor now as much as she had loved him for his victory.

"What will you do with the bracelet?" she asked.

"Oh, you may keep it!" laughed Franklin, lightly.

"I've a great mind to throw it away into the water."



"I don't think you will!" said Elliott, gravely.

He was right; her nature was incapable of such depth, even of capriciousness; she was all froth and sparkle, like fresh champagne. Julie was not the one to throw anything away which might some day be valuable as a loan to what the English call "Uncle," and the French, "Aunt."

On their return they found the rest of the party in the act of landing. The other ladies looked suspiciously at Julie, but laughed when they saw her black looks.

Franklin was easy and careless, and satisfied with himself.

"What have you done with the bracelet?" asked one of the girls with a smirk.

"Returned it to the owner," said Franklin. "It was of no use to me."

"And how about the lady you love best?" asked another.

"She's too far off to take presents. She's what you might call a distant connection," laughed Franklin.

"This has been a great day for the United States!" announced Tann, with well-assumed patriotism. "America is the head of the river."

"Yes, and the tail," added Franklin, alluding to Tann's ignominious defeat.

Meanwhile luncheon had been spread, and the party settled itself to partake of the cold provender. Julie had recovered her equanimity and was returning to the charge, determined to conquer or die.

She ran a great risk of dying.

Tann was inimitable; he had never seen his native country but that did not prevent his enlarging on its merits.

"Have you ever heard the true story of Columbus's discovery of America?" he asked.

The company was compelled to admit it had never heard but one account and that never varied.



"Well," began Sadler, "what I'm going to tell you has been a secret for hundreds of years. Columbus enjoined secrecy on the two or three who were on the inside, because, as he said, 'Boys, I wish to stand well with posterity,' and they, having no ambition that way, bound themselves by oath never to reveal what I am about to disclose. It doesn't matter now if it does get about; nobody will believe it. Columbus was a pirate!"

This statement was greeted with a shout of laughter.

"You may laugh," said Sadler, "but hear me out. Columbus took his name from the state capital of Ohio. When quite a boy he yearned to follow the sea for a living, and at eighteen he found himself first mate on board an Arab dhow, which carried on a profitable trade in black ivory, and ran between the coast of Guinea and Cadiz. He was very fond of talking with the slaves in the hold, and in this way he picked up much valuable information. It seems that they had a tradition that far across the ocean, beyond the Canaries and Verdes, there was a great and glorious land, whose flag was the 'Stars and Stripes,' and where the eagle flapped its wings to the tune of 'Hail Columbia.' Columbus heard this, believed it, and being of a red copper-color, like the North American Indians, concluded that he had been stolen away in his youth by gypsies. He was right. Science has proved that the Icelanders had communication with America, long before Columbus's time.

"He immediately formulated his plans; he had vowed to discover the city from which he derived his name, and to this end, embarked in the hazardous calling of piracy. All his savings were invested in a galleon, of two hundred tons burden, known in those days as a 'caraque.' With a band of choice spirits he commenced a life of lawlessness and discovery; he circumnavigated the globe, and chanced on the



United States, Brazil, and even Australia and New Zealand. Being thoroughly satisfied that they existed, he determined to discover them; and to give greater tone to the undertaking, he roped Ferdinand of Spain into it.

“‘I will give you six caraques to find America with, if you can make the egg stand on the table,’ said the king.

“Columbus accepted the test, and calling for a fresh egg, shook it up, broke the yolk, which all flowed to the lower end, and gently and successfully balanced the fruit of the hen.

“‘Very good,’ said Ferdinand. ‘If any man can discover America, you’re the boy.’

“Thereupon Columbus set out with six caraques, and tinned provisions for a six months’ journey; but having been there before he had no difficulty in finding the way, and three months and four days after he left Lisbon, he passed the Sandy Hook lightship and anchored in New York Bay.

“The Mayor and others came out to meet him, and as he set foot in Castle Garden, he said, ‘Where are we now?’

“The Mayor answered, ‘In America.’

“‘America!’ remarked Columbus; ‘then I have discovered it at last.’

“His followers dispersed throughout the city and set up in business as fruit venders; but Columbus returned to Europe and lectured on his discoveries, and became famous in consequence.

“He had just induced Ferdinand to advance him money on another continent he was going to discover, viz.: Australia, when he died.

“Only three of his pirate comrades knew that he had been to America before he discovered it, and they kept the secret locked in their breasts. One of the pirates was my grandfather, three times removed.”

“America is a great country,” added Tann; and on



hints given him by Franklin, he proceeded to describe New York, making every house a palace, every street an etherialized boulevard.

"We have buildings twenty-five stories high," he stated; "all the stairways have beer saloons on the landings, in which the weary traveller on his climb may rest and refresh."

"What's the matter with the elevators?" asked Elliott.

"They were not running when I was there in the sixteenth century, with Columbus."

There was another yell of delight at this, and Justin gave it as his opinion that Columbus was a Frenchman.

"Everything that ever was done in the world, of any importance, was done by Frenchmen," he proudly announced; "we are first in literature, love and war."

"We give in to you on love," said Franklin; "on literature and war, no. In war you must admit that the British have whipped you nearly every time."

Justin began to foam, and muttered, "By treachery."

"Treachery, or no treachery," added Franklin, "the fact remains. Well, a hundred years back, we Americans whipped the British; therefore America can whip the world, and don't you forget it!"

The ladies applauded Franklin, and Justin grew fierce and warlike, and *sacréd* England and America, impartially.

The champagne was unlimited, and the ladies indulged in it far more freely than the gentlemen, so that before long their tongues were rattling away and general delirious excitement possessed them. Julie became more and more affectionate to Franklin; she pretended to be tired and leaned her golden head against his shoulder. Much as he would have liked to move and drop her down, he could not do it.

The sun was now shining directly into the camp-



ing ground; the parasols were brought into requisition and the ladies sat in their shade, while the gentlemen lounged at their feet. Julie of course seized on Franklin; she threw herself down beside him and putting her parasol between them and the others, said,

"I forgive you."

Franklin said, "Thanks, but don't go to any expense on my account."

Julie sighed and smiled, and smiled and sighed. She let her hand fall on his and drew nearer. There is no doubt that she was pretty, exceedingly so. Her figure was symmetrically plump and neatly attired; Franklin was bound to confess it to himself.

"It's very warm, isn't it, Franklin?" She called him Franklin now, and very prettily too; but he didn't seem to care. What was the matter with the man? she thought; she did not seem to make any progress with him.

"You don't object to my smoking, do you?" asked Franklin, taking a cigarette out of the pocket of his blazer.

"Oh, I adore smoking," said Julie, enthusiastically. And Mr. Elliott wondered how it was that she could not say a simple thing like that without gushing over it.

"Tann must think I'm a fool. As if a vapid, showy creature like this could lure me!" He was boastful now, but he forgot that he had not been too adamant all along.

"I'm glad Jack went back," soliloquized Franklin; "he might have been dragged into this, and he would have seen this girl pursuing me. It's no good telling a fellow you dislike being pursued; he always believes you have invited it."

So the day wore on; dusky twilight was upon them, and the row back was a delightful prospect. The ladies and their cavaliers sought their respective boats and launched out upon the river once more.

Any person with the slightest suspicion of senti-



ment in his or her nature must have a tendency to silence under such circumstances. There was the river flowing with scarce a ripple on it, save where it swashed among the reeds skirting the low eastern bank. The other bank was high and prettily fringed with trees, which threw a clearly defined black shadow down on the silent water. The sky, a greenish blue above them, in the west was a glorious golden yellow; the sun was sinking fast. Franklin, in ordinary, was not sentimental; but it must be remembered that he was in love, and the girl he loved far away. So he fell into a *rêverie* of some duration. Finally arousing himself with a start, he commenced rowing vigorously.

"Are you anxious to get home?" asked Julie.

"Yes," said Franklin; "I want to write some letters."

"One, I suppose, to your sweetheart?"

"Your supposition is based on a likely hypothesis."

"I knew there was something!" said Julie.

"There generally is," agreed Elliott.

"Something to prevent you from loving me! You are in love with some good, sweet girl," ventured Julie. Franklin nodded. "And you were contrasting her with me all the time!"

"You reminded me of her—you are so different."

"I'm sorry and I'm glad. I could have really liked you, and I hope you'll be happy with her. The life I lead gets very sickening; but there is no other way that would suit me now. I was innocent once—long since." (She was not so young as she looked, then.)

"I'm not a born Parisian," she continued; "perhaps that accounts for my having once been respectable."

That was not so bad. Franklin laughed, and then rowed on in silence. The laughter of the others came to their ears across the quiet water, and with all the gladness it spoke of, there was a touch of sadness in its influence on these two. They were the last. Whereat the reader may expect a dramatic situation



to follow; but no, they remained last and nothing came of it. There may even be disappointment expressed at Tann's not having been drowned, or partially, but it is not our object to depart from veracity, even for the sake of sensational effects. Tann did not upset his boat, though he was frequently near it. About eight o'clock the leader moored at the foot of the lawn adjoining the inn, and ten minutes later the whole party was in the *dépôt* awaiting the arrival of the return train.

Tann and Elliott walked up and down together on the platform, apparently in angry argument. Mr. Tann looked disappointed, and the few words that reached the ears of Julie, though confusing, fully confirmed her suspicions of his disgust with Frankiin.

"I'm wearied," he said; "it's no use! I'm thinking of going home."

"What for?" questioned Elliott, in surprise.

"I'm wanted. I'll send a deputy; there are lots of my fellows who will be better in every way as companions for you than I am."

"No," decided Franklin, "my contract was for personal attendance. I want no meddling middlemen doing business with me. I deal only with principals."

Tann's dealing was also confined to principles; but somehow he could not undermine his friend's.

"Here's the train!"

When they reached Paris, it was nine o'clock. Seven of the party repaired to a restaurant to finish the evening with a carousal, and the eighth, Franklin, said, "Good-night," and left them to abuse him.



## CHAPTER XI.

IN WHICH WE SHIFT THE SCENE TO NEW YORK, AND  
OUR HEROINE BECOMES AN ADOPTED SISTER.

IN writing a novel (which can scarcely be called a novel) such as the one we were, and the reader is now, engaged upon, the author needs all the fictitious interest he can command; he cannot afford to let his heroine drop out of recollection, but must at intervals strive to create sympathy for her. This has the semblance of "Advice to Aspiring Novelists," but it is a fact that established authors would do well to recognize; these gentlemen being somewhat apt to underrate the influence of their early trucklings to the conventionalities, and to overrate the effect of their fine writing. It is inadvisable to kill your hero or heroine at the conclusion; it is just as well to have them both married, and if possible, to each other. Such an eventuality must be foreshadowed in the opening chapters, in order to give the reader an opportunity of guessing the ultimate result, which proving to be correct according to surmise, induces him to pat himself on the back for his discriminating cleverness. When the story lacks continuity, when one chapter is not the natural outcome of the preceding, the author has a hard task before him to chain the attention of the adventurous reader.

When there is little mystification and consequently little absorbing interest, the scribe has but one chance left; he must be smart, bright, flashy, and take his victims along at a pace which forbids thought.



Having thrown a strong calcium light upon the weaknesses of this work, and having taken the wind out of the sails of criticism by the forestalling process, let us on.

There was quite a crowd on the dock to greet the travellers. There was Aunt Eveleena, Uncle Peter, and a crook-handled cane with an inspired looking youth attached, waiting to meet Violet. Her only relations! There were about twenty in all to congratulate the Harpers on their safe arrival. As the great steamer slowly moved along side the dock-head, those on shore cheered and waved handkerchiefs of all sizes and textures, dainty trifles of lace and large squares of flaming silk. The passengers from every available stand answered by a similar waving and a rush to the portion of the vessel destined for the reception of the gangway. Soon the crowd poured over the narrow planking and a chorus of greetings filled the air. "Oh, Laura, how well you look!" "This way, old man! Got a hack on the street." "So glad to see you!" "I'll take your grip."

Violet, calm and pretty, walked down the temporary bridge, and was effusively embraced by Aunt Eveleena, and haughtily smiled on by Uncle Peter. The delighted relatives carried the blossom of the family along unresistingly, leaving the youth with the helpless cast of features, to attend to her baggage and to get it expressed to the house. "Poor dear!" thought Eveleena, "she must be tired after her long journey!" As they passed out of the gates, Violet nodded to Belle, who was standing by Jack, earnestly engaged in conversation with some friends; and Belle, with her old time heedlessness, cried out, "Vi, don't forget the address!" Violet smiled her reply, and was hurried out on the street and into the Woods carriage, before she realized that her foot was upon her native pavement.

The weeks, protracted themselves into apparent



months for our heroine. The change of surroundings and of society was altogether too sudden. Whereas in Paris, she had been sad while all around was bright, in the Fifth Avenue residence she was the bright break in an ever gloomy sky. Aunt Eveleena was a pathetic invalid, with the constitution of a clothes-horse; Uncle Peter was a grumpy sufferer, with the kicking powers of an ostrich, and Leonard shone in several walks of the animal kingdom.

As before casually remarked, Leonard was an Anglo-maniac; not that he was aware of it. His aping of the British dude was the result of his having taken contagion from "some other fellahs, don't cher know?" He wore continuations uncomfortably tight and attractively light in color, but deucedly killing. At times these trousers formed part of a complete suit; at other times they set off an absurdly short Prince Albert coat cut close to the figure. Leonard had a fall in his back. Very few tailors could take advantage of it; that was one reason why he changed his costumer so often. Another reason was that his father kept him short. Leonard wore high collars, which caused his chin to stick out beyond the line of a small round nose, hardly noticeable except in profile. Beneath his collar, a scarf of snowy white never failed to appear. Add a crook-handle stick and tan gloves, and you get Violet's cousin, in his mid-day apparel. He was twenty-two years of age, and his sire was wealthy enough for him to do nothing at all, but trot around and "give the girls a treat, old fel'."

Violet, from the very first, had dreaded walking out with it; but a cousinly feeling of compassion and that womanly sympathy ever ready for those who can't help it, assisted her to the requisite fortitude. Nevertheless she blushed when she noticed the result of its daily promenade on Madison Square. Everybody stared at it, and a majority laughed and felt sorry for the girl. It attracted considerable attention to



Violet, who finally became known as the "pretty girl who takes that puppy out for his airing."

Leonard was making desperate running to oblige his parents; though he rather fancied Belle was the girl for him.

Violet was beautiful; he loved her like a sister, he told himself; "but the other girl was a jim-dandy; so much dash and abandon about her; suited his go-ahead nature, and all that sort of thing."

Aunt Eveleena, despite her perennially agitated nerves, noticed however, that his progress was slow, and begged him to appear less ridiculous, as a girl like Violet was only to be caught by sense. "You must endeavor to appear as if you had brains," she said. "I am sure your dear father and I—weak as Heaven has willed me—have done our duty in having you educated thoroughly."

"Can't make bricks without straw, deah mothah; old proverb, ye know!" stated Leonard, thinking to settle the discussion.

"You can make something to look like bricks!" retorted his mother. "If the deception is discovered after marriage it doesn't matter. You'll have the money then."

"Hasn't pa got enough? Ain't I an only son, mothah mine?" asked Leonard, playfully.

"Leonard! would you see half a million go out of the Woods family?"

"How would it? If Vi were to marry some othah fellah she'd still belong to the Woods family. Got you theah, mothah."

"And the 'othah fellah' would take it all over to himself. You *must* marry her."

"Hah if *she* don't see it?"

"You must propose to her and point it out till she does."

"Mothah deah, you know not what you ask!" said Leonard, tragically, putting his right hand into the



left inside-pocket of his coat and producing a cigarette case.

"Leonard, put that away! you know I abhor the sight of smoke."

Leonard answered nothing, and Aunt Eveleena went on with her advice, and the boy finally consented to swallow his scruples and propose to his cousin the first opportunity, "The beauty of it is," he thought, "I am certain to be refused. It'll be good practice for me though, and will come in useful when I really want to pop the question."

The conviction that he was too big an idiot to be considered seriously by Violet, whom he described as, "a girl who frightens a fellah, by Jove!" agitated his marrow.

Those gray eyes gazing steadily into his, always made him feel uncomfortable and anxious to get away. He realized as well as any one that she was too good for him. What he wanted was some overpowering girl to order him about and to reduce him to abject submission.

No opportunity offered that day for him to press his suit, and the following day was exceptionally unfavorable for the success his mother hoped for. Among the letters received that morning was one with the *Republique Francaise* postage stamp. It was from Paris—from Franklin. Violet flushed as she picked the letter up from her plate. The eagle eye of Aunt Eveleena had noted both the flush and the envelope.

"We'll excuse you, Violet, if you wish to read your letter now," said Aunt Ev, with her most gracious manner; but the plan did not work. Violet recovered her equanimity and put the note in her pocket unread, saying that it could wait. When she was alone in her room she behaved in a way that would have driven Franklin crazy. She straightened the crumples out and actually kissed the handwriting. It was a very quiet, timid kiss. It was really nothing more than a pressure of the lips, without anything of the violent



pursing and audible separation business; but Violet knew what it was passing through her mind, and she blushed for the second time that morning.

“DEAR MISS WOODS:—I was nearly saying ‘dear Violet,’ but I feared you might think me too presumptuous. I have, you see by this, availed myself of your gracious permission to write to you, and I give myself far more pleasure in the writing than I dare hope you receive in the reading.”

Violet smiled at that as only girls built on Heaven’s best lines can smile.

“I shall write most probably every week—I will say every week *for certain*; then you will know, on failing to hear from me, either that something has happened, or that I have ceased to value your friendship as I now do!”

There was an additional punctuation mark from Violet. She laughed to herself very softly, as if she knew more than she cared to tell, and then sighed, oh, so contentedly! She went on reading.

“I have very little news that would interest you. We think of going to Constantinople next week; anyway we shall be there before you could reach me with a reply. I want to see all that I can now, so that when I settle down, as I hope to at no distant date, I shall feel no desire to travel again. America is good enough for me, though the converse may not hold.”

“That’s clever,” thought Violet, enthusiastically, and she gave herself over to meditation on the “settle down” and “no distant date” clauses.

“I cannot write all I should like to. Then again, I can, but maybe I mayn’t; for there are things which in communication are better by word of mouth.”

Um! Strong hints these!

“That is why this letter is so short.”

“Too short,” reflected Miss Woods, turning over the leaf.

“I expect to be in London, three or four weeks



from now, so please address letters to Grand Hotel, Charing Cross, if you desire to favor me with a reply. Believe me,

“Ever your devoted friend,

“FRANKLIN ELLIOTT.”

Violet finished her perusal and dropped her hands into her lap and gazed at an imaginary spot in the sky for several minutes; at the end of which time she rose with a sigh, opened her dressing-case and entrusted the treasure to it with a show of reluctance. Then came a repetition of the attitude of thoughtfulness. She would have remained in her happy oblivion for a considerable period, had there not been an interruption. A knock came to the door, and a voice followed.

“What are you doing, Violet? We are waiting for you.” Violet awoke with a start and another blush.

“I’m coming, auntie!” She had forgotten all about the usual drive which her delicate relative, Aunt Eveleena, required to brace her poor nerves. In two minutes she was down-stairs, and was entering the carriage, when Belle Harper appeared.

“Going out driving, Vi?” asked Belle. “I was just calling on you. I’ve got nothing to do, so I guess I’ll go with you.”

Before Aunt Eveleena could find an objection, Belle was sitting by Violet and in an animated conversation. Leonard, also, who had intended to air his newest on the Square, changed his mind, and took the seat by his mother, with a smirk at Belle, which met with but frigid recognition.

“Violet, dear,” said Belle, turning to her friend and ignoring the Woods, aunt and son, “I’ve great news! Jack received a letter from Franklin this morning.” Leonard started with jealousy—Franklin! “He’s such a dear fellow, I’m quite in love with him.” Woods junior wriggled uneasily in his seat. “He asks after you three times in each page. It is evident he did not read his letter over after it was



written, or he never would have sent it; it's positively ridiculous."

"He wrote quite sensibly to me," said Violet. And again her face lighted up with a faint flush of color which rendered her completely irresistible, even to some women, for Belle kissed her with enthusiasm.

Aunt Eveleena sniffed the air and opened wide her ears. Leonard, on the other hand, finding Franklin was not affected towards Belle, recovered from his temporary depression and beamed and beamed, till he strained his neck in his attempt to win a smile from Belle.

He had been thus employed for over a quarter of an hour, when his mother, perceiving his little antics, asked in her most suave tones what he was trying to do; if there was a boil on his neck, he must have it seen to.

On the way back from the Park, Belle asked Violet to stop in at her house, an invitation which the latter was only too glad to accept for the pleasure of being away from her affectionate relatives. The two girls got out of the carriage, much to Aunt Eveleena's dissatisfaction, and Belle called out with a touch of spite, "Jack will see Violet home, Mrs. Woods, so don't trouble."

Leonard simpered an "au revoir," and made a mental note of the number, intending to walk up that way occasionally, so as "to meet hah, if possible, by acci-don' ch' know?"

Aunt Eveleena began to hate Belle Harper, and to complain of the want of affection displayed by her formerly beloved niece, whom she had mentally appointed to read the magazine to her that evening.

When Leonard arrived home his mother dragged him into the drawing-room to rate him for his negligence.

Why hadn't he been attentive to Violet? He could easily have displayed a respectful preference. Instead of that he had seemingly avoided her as if she frightened him.



"That's just it, mothah! She *does* frighten me. She's nice, and all that, but she gives a fellah so deuced little encouragement, ye know, that he feels chilled. It requires more determination than I have to stand up to hah."

"You're a fool, Leonard!"

"I can't help it, mothah."

"You must summon up courage; don't you know there's another in the field?"

"Yes, and I'm the other side of the fence; I've no chance."

"Why not? He's in Paris; and she is here, and her half million with her. Propose to her quickly."

"She'd laugh at me, mothah, and no chappie likes to be laughed at, don' ch' know? Besides, he saved her from the fire."

"Well, you must save her from him. It's an act quite as meritorious, if not so showy."

"She won't see it that way."

"The man is an adventurer. He wants her money. No doubt he enticed her into that fire for the express purpose of posing as a heroic deliverer."

"Yes, and had hah fathah and mothah burnt to a cinder in order to make shuah of Violet getting the boodle."

"Slang, Leonard!"

"Yes, mothah; you know it well enough to recognize it."

Aunt Eveleena upon this flounced out of the room, angered that her angel-boy, Leonard, had somehow got the better of her in the argument. Leonard remained soliloquizing for ten minutes after his mother's departure.

He finally decided to speak to Miss Woods that evening, as it was not likely any harm could come of it.

Violet returned about nine o'clock under Jack Harper's escort. She had refused to accompany Belle to a theatre, as Aunt Eveleena might be anxious about her. Jack left her at the door, and Violet, bidding him



"good-night," ran lightly into the drawing-room. Leonard was there, shuffling a deck of cards for amusement.

"Come in, Vi! I want to speak to you, don'ch' know?" said her cousin, dropping the cards upon the carpet.

Violet threw her hat on the table and seated herself. She busied herself taking off her gloves while Leonard talked.

"Violet," began Leonard, "you ain't married unbeknown to the family, are yah?"

Violet laughed and said, "That's a nice question to ask! of course not!"

"Yes—es," stammered Leonard; "I thought I'd like to know if I had a brother-in-law,—I mean a cousin-in-law-er. The fact is I want to ask you, ye know, whether you are anxious to love me as a sister—or as a brother—because—I mean a sister is as far as I could expect you to go—don't know if you follow me?"

"I understand you," interrupted Violet, "you want to know if I will be a sister to you? Certainly, with pleasure."

"That's all right!" said Leonard, briskly. "Then you don't want to marry me, and I have done my duty to mothah. You have refused me."

"You didn't propose to me!"

"Same thing! You have made me very happy, Violet."

"Because I refused you?"

"Yes; I don't love you a bit—in that way. You're a real nice girl, and all that, but not my style; not my form, as they say in England, don'ch' know?"

After this revelation Leonard became very easy and talked fluently on various subjects, amongst others of Belle Harper. Then the conversation turned upon Franklin Elliott, and Violet became eloquent.

Uncle Peter came in in the middle of their dialogue



and broke it off at a most interesting part. Uncle Peter was a brusque man, whose principal bliss was derived from baiting his own son.

"Oh! you're in this evening, are you? you clothes pin! you lay figure! What has happened that you grace the family hearth with your company to-night?" asked Peter, glaring.

"Just took the notion into my head, don'ch'know? fathah!" answered Leonard, unabashed.

"Your head has taken something sensible into it at last, you Anglomaniac! you—"

"You'd be as bad as the othah fellahs if you'd ever been across and shaken hands with Albert Edward, pah, don'ch'know?"

Violet, meanwhile had withdrawn from their presence, and being tired, had sought her room.

"You've driven Violet away, pah, with your loudness," continued Leonard.

"Um!" growled Peter. "Has your mother said anything about Violet?"

"Yes, I've proposed to her."

"Ah! that accounts for your happiness. Boy, I congratulate you."

"Thank you, fathah! I'm glad you like it. She refused me."

"What?"

"Refused me! concisely, but formally! It's all right; I've got a new sister."

"You brainless emanation of personified idiocy!"

"Don't call yourself bad names, fathah."

"You—" continued old Peter Woods, growing blind with rage—but Leonard was on his way up stairs.

There was grief in the parental portion of the Woods family, that evening.



## CHAPTER XII.

### IN WHICH WE VIEW THE INNER LIFE OF A HAREM.

SEVERAL weeks of the tinsel glories and terrestrial glammers of the West had failed, and dismally, in their purpose, and Sadler A. Tann's mental eye now roamed towards the gorgeous East. Paris, with all its inducements to folly, was a dead letter as regards temptation; but the enervating luxury of the Moslem world had thus far been spared a chance of triumph and with it the ignominy of defeat. Constantinople, resting in squalor and magnificence on the blue waters of the Bosphorus, was a potent shaft among the few yet remaining in the Satanic quiver. The land of mosque and minaret, of El Koran, Bismillah, and Rahat Lakoum was still powerful for evil; the atmosphere of hookah, fez, turban, odalisque and seraglio, and other Turkish eccentricities, possessed an enervating influence hitherto unessayed. Shades of Mahamoud, Omar, and Suleiman the Magnificent, to say nothing of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus! you little dream that the infernal powers regard your beliefs as a royal road to Avernus, or any other polite name you like to adjust to H——.

We will not trouble to relate the details of the journey, nor excite your nerves with blood-curdling stories of Montenegrin bandits or Dalmatian pirates. Oh, no, truth before everything. Have you ever been to Constantinople, dear peruser? No? Well, it doesn't matter. Guide book in hand we will roam its shady, sweet-smelling streets together; we will see whether what some people tell us agrees with what



other people tell us. There are very few travellers who are capable of describing the scenes they have visited; then it is, that the guide-book comes in handy.

Constantinople, we are informed by most encyclopædias, was founded by Constantine the Great; though why he should have gone to all the trouble and expense is left to the imagination. There was already a city within easy swimming distance, it was called Byzantium; but Constantine looked with real-estate eyes across the brook dividing the existing city from the non-existing, and saw that it was high, situated in the vicinity of pines and free from malaria and mosquitoes; that, in short, it possessed all the requisites for a land-agent's circular. Even an emperor is not above a little gamble when he sees a dead sure thing and knows his own facilities for booming the market. So Constantine, disguised as a mill-owner, purchased the land at his own price, with the avowed intention of building a meat-packing factory.

Then he returned to Byzantium and started the boom.

The Empress, history informs us, gave out that the court was about to move its base of operations to a vacant lot on the other side of the strait. This rumor caused the hangers-on of imperialism to purchase villa sites in the new city, which was accordingly laid out as Constantinopolis.

But Constantine, having an interest in the Bosphorus ferry-boat company, was loth to make the change without working the investment for all it was worth; thus it was that for nearly three years the officers of the household, and the recognized imperial deadheads, were compelled to do the journey at least twice a day. This brought the B. F. B. Co. shares up to a premium and Constantine sold out at a fabulous profit. In a month he was installed in Constantinople, and the B. F. B. Co. was bankrupt in less than a year.



This was the founding of the mighty centre of Oriental Empire. We might, were this a treatise on the Orient, follow the fortunes of this famous city; but it isn't.

Constantinople is noted for several things, but chiefly for the hankering which Russia has to possess it.

There is also the Mosque of Omar, a well-known Caliph who was on the road about the season of 700 A. D.

A word or two on Mohammedanism might not be out of place in this chapter and therefore thoroughly in keeping with the surroundings.

Mahomet, Mohammed and several other variations on the name, was born possibly in Arabia Felix, but the highest authorities hand him over to an obscurer locality. After all, the birthplace doesn't effect a man's chances of being great.

When in his teens, Mahomet was smitten with a thirst for biblical knowledge, and in the pages of Scripture satisfied his appetite; only for a time, alas! Then he began to find fault with the sacred writings, and fancied he could, with a little inspiration, do a great deal better himself. With an occasional hint from his friend, the Angel Gabriel, he succeeded in weaving a highly-colored romance, which he called El Koran; in which was proclaimed with strength amounting to conviction that there was only one God and Mahomet was his prophet. Now, scoffing critics were at first inclined to question the second part of the proclamation; they agreed on the one God, but failed to see Mahomet's ergo. It was necessary, therefore, for the young author to carry conviction with him wherever he went, so that in a very short period, all the survivors in that part of the country fell in with his views. Mohammedanism spread with the rapidity of an epidemic, and in a few years all the lands south of the Mediterranean gave in their allegiance to the pugilistic religion.



The chief and most attractive feature of the belief is *ad libitum* matrimony, or polygamy. A man can start housekeeping with only one wife, if his circumstances are moderate; but as his means increase so he may increase his matrimonial stock, by gathering in all the nice girls he knows. With care and discrimination, a connoisseur can collect many beautiful and valuable specimens of womanhood.

This is the sole advantage Mohammedanism has over Christianity, and even that is almost neutralized by the ordinance in the El Koran which forbids the use of roast pork and wines.

A harem, we are informed by experienced people, is as expensive a luxury as a racing-stud, and we might add, far more difficult to manage.

Sadler A. Tann, as an admirer of wholesale marriage, thought to tempt Franklin into that form of extravagance, by taking him East and setting forth to his gaze the luxuriousness and sensual elegance of the best establishments.

His Majesty the Sultan, Abdul el—something, felt a certain amount of creditable pride in himself, in that he had brought the system to the highest point of perfection; and herein lay his success. He had grappled the difficulty of the royal residences in a sensible way. Like most monarchs he had a palace near the seat of government, a summer palace, a winter ditto, and yet another in the hunting country; and conveying the uxorial appendages from one place to another was a formidable item in the expense column.

Abdul El with economic yearnings, hit upon this expedient, namely, to have a harem in connection with each of the royal residences. By this means, Mrs. Abdul was spared the worry and fatigue of railway travelling, and no matter where he went, there was always a sweet welcome, and a cup of tea and a pair of slippers warming for him on the top of the stove.



Of Abdul's numerous wife emporiums, the Constantinople house was justly deemed the finest; as was only to be expected, for matters of state compelled the Sultan's attendance in the capital a greater part of the year.

Unfortunately for sight-seers and searchers after curios, the Oriental monarch enclosed his preserves with the barbed-wire fence of exclusiveness and formulæ. It was well-nigh impossible to pass the outer doors, and a strong cordon of sentries forbade admittance into the inner sanctuaries. Still, granted a sufficiency of cold-blooded impudence, there is a good deal to be done in the way of evading guards. In addition to this accomplishment, which Franklin possessed in a marked degree, Sadler A. had in some way learned the word of the day, which was "Mansourah." It was, of course, within the range of his powers, to take on invisibility and walk straight in unchallenged; but his mortal nature rendered him at times forgetful of his immortal accomplishments.

Accordingly, about five o'clock in the afternoon the two intending intruders left their hotel and strode with firm, unhesitating steps in the direction of the Seraglio. Space debars us the pleasure of describing their route in detail. The word "Mansourah" worked like a charm on the first two or three sentries they encountered, but the further they advanced the less potent their password became. The fourth guard stopped them, and in spite of Mansourah looked into their eyes as if to read their inmost thoughts. Finally he waved his hand for them to pass on, but the verdict his mind had arrived at was manifestly "not proven." After this our two friends proceeded with caution. Their movements were those usually associated with the profession of burglary.

Happily, the corridors along which their course was directed were enveloped in the indistinctness of twilight, that bewildering time of day, when it is too



dark to distinguish clearly and not dark enough to light the lamps.

The passages wound round and round in every direction in giddy tortuosity, as if designed to foil interlopers, but Tann's instinct was never at fault. One would have thought that he was accustomed to breaking into harems, and yet this was his first. Franklin followed close on his heels, with that absence of trepidation which was characteristic of him. Suddenly a voice rang in their ears and a scimitar clanked ominously. "Halt!" in Turkish, ordered the voice.

Both deemed it advisable to agree with the sentry on that point. Sadler remarked "Mansourah!" in his best Oriental accent.

The sentry threw out his chest with a mighty effort and growled, "Istamboul?"

This was a poser. The reply was given in an interrogative tone which demonstrated beyond question, that another password was expected of them.

"'Mansourah' doesn't go right through the building," said Franklin, with a laugh.

Sadler repeated, "Mansourah," and made as if to advance, but encountered the point of the scimitar, and there was a dead-lock.

"Mesmerize him," suggested Franklin.

Sadler A. winked, passed his hands in front of the soldier three or four times, and reversed positions.

"Halt!" muttered Tann.

"Mansourah!" replied the sentry.

"Istamboul?" queried Tann.

"Razadam!" was the answer.

"Anything else?"

"No!"

In almost less time than it takes to record the fact, the sentry was enacting his proper role and was satisfied with a bold and unflinching "Razadam."

They passed on, and with the help of the new word met with next to no interruption.



But turning round the corner of a passage, the sound of light laughter from the throats of young and handsome women greeted their ears, and here the gigantic form of a Turkish soldier assailed their eyes.

This latest object and Tann carried on an animated conversation for some time, while Franklin amused himself by listening to the different and conflicting pronunciation of the Turkish idioms. All Sadler's arguments were useless; the sentinel was obdurate. Nothing less than a written order, signed in Abdul El's handwriting, could remove his objections to their appearance. That was an insurmountable difficulty, apparently; a stranger couldn't very well ask the Sultan for permission to pry into his domestic arrangements. Franklin, in the act of deliberating their next move, lowered his eyes to the pavement and accidentally concentrated his gaze on the feet of the obstructor—and they *were* feet! No ordinary twelve-inch feet! These pedal extremities spread out both breadthwise and lengthwise in unparalleled lavishness. The more Franklin looked, the firmer grew the conviction that he had seen those feet before, had known them intimately, indeed. But it was absurd! What should bring them into a Seraglio? The guard, however, solved the problem unsolicited; for mistaking the nationality of his visitors, he grunted under his breath, "Och! have they never seen big fait before?"

"What!" Franklin almost shouted, "Danny O'Rafferty, is that you?"

"Who the divil are ye anyway?"

"One who knew you, Danny, when you patrolled the eighteenth precinct and can never forget you. Will you deny you are Mr. Danny O' Rafferty?"

"Sorra one. How's Bradway lookin'?"

"Splendid! But how came you here?"

"Hush! Coom into the gyard-room and Oi'll till ye."

Danny pulled aside a heavy curtain ornamenting



the wall and disclosed a small chamber, furnished with a few rugs, a low table and a stand for guns; heavy Turkish tapestries serving in place of wall papers.

"Be sated," cried Danny; and his guests laid themselves out on the floor in picturesque attitudes.

"Whin Oi lift the force," began Danny, "under circumstances not favorable to me character, Oi became a sailor, and in the coorse of me voyagin' Oi came to Consthantoinople. One noight when Oi was ramblin' the strates, lookin' after nothin' in perticular, sounds of foightin' and cursin' fit for divils, broke up the soilence av the noight. Me first tought was to avide the distirbance; but me blood got up at the prospect ov a foight, and Oi wint in, head first, and shtruck out whiriver there was anything to hit at. The crowd wilted away loike the frosht on a window when you breathe on it, and a man seized me hand and observed, 'You have saved my loife.' It was the Sultan himself. Loike a wise man, Oi neglected to ashk him the whoi of his prisence in that disr'putable quarther, and he tuk me home wid him, and here I am, head gyard over the prettiest gerruls in the wurrlld."

Franklin laughed over this brief history, and explained their wish to O'Rafferty, who shook his head, and said that even he was not allowed in the drawing-room or salon, or whatever name they gave to the room in which the wives lounged all through the day.

It appeared, however, that the Sultan had certain hours when his presence was necessary on state matters, and that in this time the gay Sultanas flirted to their hearts' content with the officers of the household.

A great part of the military guard was of necessity concerned in the fraud, so that the sentinels on whatever route the Sultan approached, could pass the warning along in ample time for the traitorous



employees to make good their escape in some other direction.

Danny professed much virtuous indignation at the breaches of marital confidence he was compelled to wink at.

To inform the Sultan of the outrageous proceedings was not to be debated for a moment; Danny wasn't a sneak.

A fairy footfall in the corridor! "Hide yourselves, me bhoys!" entreated Danny.

Tann rushed behind the curtains, and Franklin, taking a couple of cushions to disguise his formation, rolled himself up in a rug so that he looked like a broad bolster. O'Rafferty threw himself at length upon the floor and leaned against this novel support, as a lady entered the apartment.

She was costumed in modern style, which is about all a man can say of a dress. Men are capable of distinguishing a tailor-made gown from a pair of gauze bespangled pantaloons, such as Turkish ladies are supposed to disport in, and that's all.

But this, though one of the Sultan's wives, was not a Turk in the national sense of the word; she was a Frenchwoman. The Ottoman potentate did not restrict his connubial tastes to one race; he was utterly devoid of patriotism in that respect.

This wife was of the Sultan's own choosing. It was while Abdul was visiting Paris that his gaze fell upon her sylph-like form as displayed to advantage in a daring costume representing a Naiad. Adrielle accepted the offer he made her, and abandoned the theatre in which she exhibited, for the easy luxury and the virtuous laxity of the royal harem. But a taste for conquest still lingered in her palate; and whether from a desire to test her powers of fascination, or from contempt of her liege lord, she set about gaining the affections of Daniel O'Rafferty. This was soon patent to both the unwilling listeners. Sadler, behind the tapestry, was vastly amused at the unre-



hearsed farce of which he was an enforced audience.

"How is it with my dear Danny?" asked Adrielle, with that low, cooing tone which is deemed so effective.

Danny's answer was possibly prompted by the knowledge of the unseen presences.

"It's a great deal bettther with Danny now, than it will be if Abdul gets wind of yer flirting wid me."

Here the impromptu sofa shook and Mr. O'Rafferty had some difficulty in maintaining his balance.

Adrielle, poor, unrequited darling! was not to be crushed by any Hibernian curtness. She sat herself down by Daniel's side and on Franklin's knees. Her weight was very painful to the bearer of it, but he did not dare move.

Sadler was in hilarious convulsions behind the curtain.

Mr. O'Rafferty, too, with that sense of humor which is never lacking in an Irishman, had great difficulty in suppressing his laughter. Oh, if Adrielle would but say anything with a suspicion of wit in it, that he might laugh and relieve his lungs! Useless wish! French wit to the English speaker is an unknown quantity.

The affectionate Parisian did not remain long; Danny's term of duty was nearly up, and a new sentinel, for whom she had no regard, was to relieve him. With a sweet kiss on his expansive upper lip, she tripped lightly out of the room, singing a merry chansonette as she went. When the voice had died away Franklin unrolled himself from the rugs and cushions, gasping and panting the while.

"Devil of a weight, the two of you," he laughed, rubbing his knee caps.

"Och! it's nothing. Oi was bearing light on yez; myself alone weighs as much as the two of us did."

This apparent paradox was allowed to pass un-



noticed, for Sadler launched out boldly into the object of their visit.

“My young friend here is writing a book on Orientals and the Orient, and of course is compelled to devote a comprehensive section to your harems and their *modus operandi*. Now, if you have ever read any works on the subject, you may possibly suspect that the authors have relied on a fervid imagination, and on descriptive power more than on truth; but he loves truth, so do I—in the abstract—therefore he wishes to study harems on the spot and from life. How is he to do it?”

Danny scratched his head till an idea came, and the result was that Franklin sacrificed his fair mustache and decked himself in the regimentals of a Sultana, and Sadler A. blacked up in the character of a deaf-mute.

Mr. O’Rafferty, presumably aided by the fair Adrielle, secured the garments, and when the metamorphosis was completed, he surveyed his handiwork with no little satisfaction.

“You’re the prettiest gerrul in the houl collection, Mr. Elliott, devil take me if you’re not.”

Sadler smiled.

“And you, sorr,” turning to Tann, “are the ugliest blackguard in the building. There’s not a nigger in the place isn’t an Adonis kimpared wid yez.”

Franklin certainly did make a very presentable kind of girl; his hair was just long enough to accord with the prevailing style, and the fairness of his beard rendered his face when shaven, as smooth-looking as the daintiest maiden’s.

He wore a beautiful pair of gauze pantaloons, with silver butterflies sprinkled at random in the pattern; a white silk petticoat with gold bordering over the continuations, and a short, navy-blue jacket embroidered with silver, over an electric blue silk vest; and to crown all, a rakish-looking Greek-pirate kind



of cap, also in navy blue, with a large silver tassel, which dangled coquettishly over his neck.

"I wonder if Abdul will get mashed on me," sighed Franklin, with brusque dejection.

"Shmall blame to 'um if he does," remarked Daniel.

"Beastly inconvenient," added Tann. "He might single him out, and it's odds on our being discovered, thrown into prison, bastinadoed and drowned in the Golden Horn. As far as I'm concerned, I'd just as soon be drowned as not."

"Whisht!" exclaimed Danny, "it's time for me relafe to come. Make a bolt for it into the saloon."

The two interlopers, obeying orders, pattered down the corridor and drawing aside the curtains at the end, found themselves in a large apartment, fitted up with all modern improvements and with every luxury in the way of upholstery; and rendered radiant by the presence of beauty of every type.

Their entrance was unnoticed by even so much as a turn of the head. That was satisfactory. Elliott threw himself onto an ottoman that suited his—her dress, and Tann betook himself to a distance, to join a group of other deaf-mutes, who were in animated conversation. Franklin picked up a yellow covered French novel which was on the ottoman and commenced to read. He had not got beyond the title and the name of the author when he was addressed by a dark-eyed girl. He at first mistook her for Danny's admirer, as she spoke in Parisian French. Abdul clearly had no prejudice against the French.

"What is your name?" asked the dark-eyed beauty.

"Aimée," answered Franklin, in his best Parisian.

"New?"

"Yes."

"You are Abdul's birthday present then."

Franklin, that is Aimée, expressed some surprise, seeing which, the little one explained. It appeared that the Sultan's mother never failed to make her son



a present of a wife every anniversary of his birthday, and of course she got the nicest young woman there was to be had. Yesterday had been the happy day of Abdul El's nativity.

This unintentional compliment actually made Franklin blush, which so amused Nina that she kissed the young bride, and said,

"Blush, my dear, while you can; you will soon lose the power here."

This remark rather alarmed Franklin, as indeed it would any young man with a residuum of modesty. He timidly asked when Abdul might be expected.

"Oh," was the laughing reply, "the old fool wouldn't come here this evening; there is a most important council on about Russian affairs, and he will be detained—and good riddance too," with an expressive shrug.

Further questions revealed that the officers of the household were expected to attend a little conversatione, which, unknown to the Sultan, they were giving.

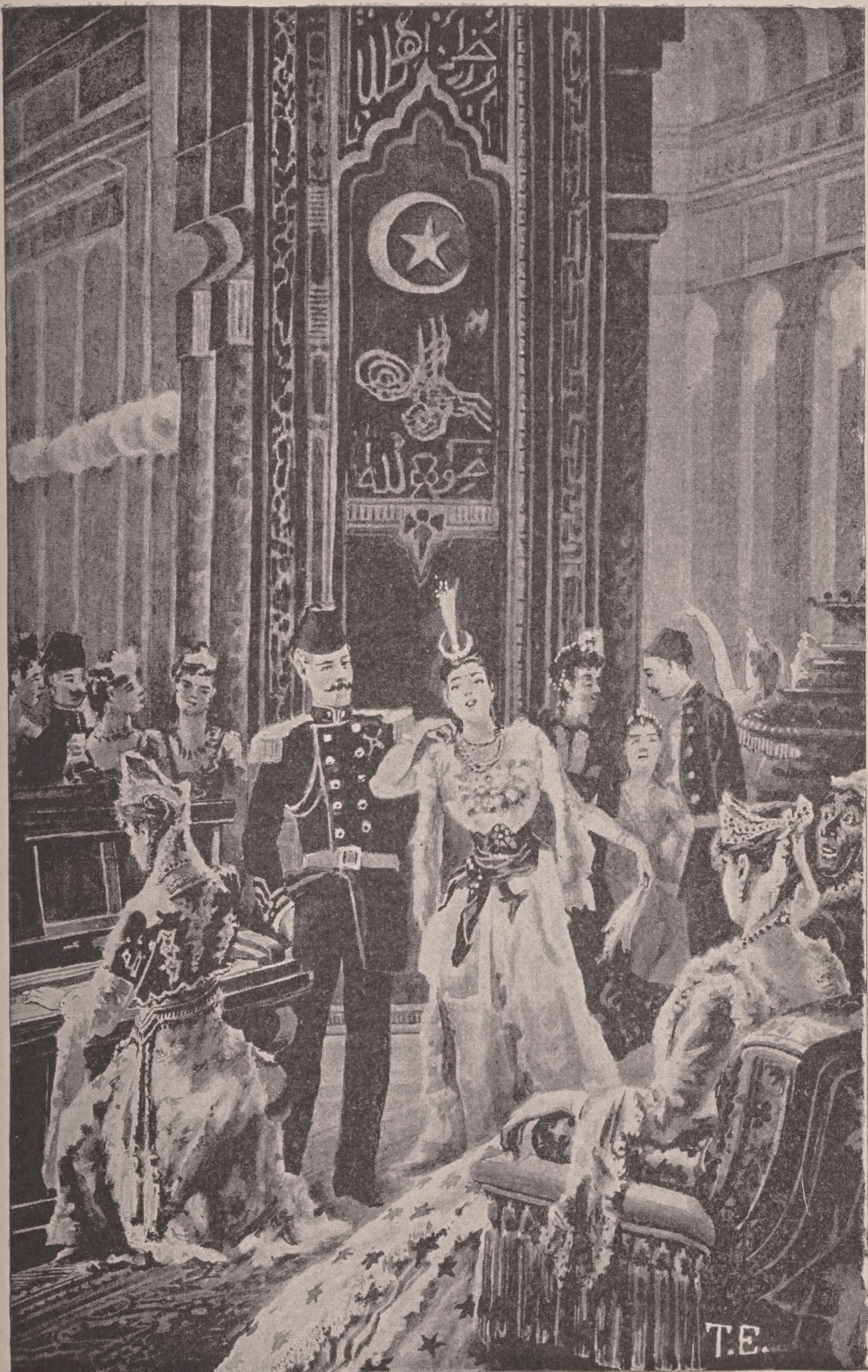
Aimée-Franklin, as a new-made bride, was just a trifle shocked; he thought nobody was allowed to see the faces of the Sultan's wives.

"That is right," exclaimed Nina. "But Abdul, the old idiot, does not know and is not likely to find out. He always comes one way from the council chambers, and all the soldiers are with us to give warning of his approach, and hey, presto! all the officers disappear the other way."

Franklin suggested that Abdul might come the other way, but Nina laughed heartily; it was so improbable.

Soon the guests began to arrive and Franklin found himself besieged by admirers seeking one smile from his ruby lips and one glance from his liquid orbs. What a difference the sex makes!—These were exactly the same lips and orbs he had rejoiced in as a man, and yet nobody had accused them of being ruby or liquid; now he was a woman, the truth was coming











out. The entertainment opened with an operatic duet between a soprano and a contralto sultana; it was heartily applauded, especially by Franklin. Many ballads and selections on the grand piano followed; and then Adrielle, attired for the occasion in a fac-simile of the dress, which by its paucity of material had won the Sultan's heart, danced a kind of a Nautch dance on the tessellated pavement. The officers cheered it with extravagant enthusiasm, while the ladies, annoyed at the undoubted triumph, scowled, and voted Adrielle the palm for brazenness.

Franklin, being new, was the centre of a group of admirers. In order to shake off their unwelcome attentions, he walked up to the piano and seating himself before the instrument vamped a selection of ditties culled from the variety halls, and finally sang, "We've both been there before, many a time," which performance created quite a sensation. He was about to complete their incipient paralysis, by an American song and dance, when Daniel O'Rafferty walked into the room and beckoned him. Tann had seen Danny enter and was at his side in a moment. With an ominous wink O'Rafferty withdrew, Tann following. Elliott remained behind for a few seconds, so as to dispel the idea of connection between the three, and then joined his companions in the corridor.

"It's all oop!" whispered Danny. "The Sultan's on to 'em. He's marchin' up from the side o' the palace and the building is surrounded by gyards. The three of us may escape if we're lively. Come on."

Not waiting for further explanation, they followed Danny's lead and groped their way down a passage in which the lamps had not been lighted. In and out, right and left they turned, listening every now and then, as the tramp of many feet drew near.

"They're in a parallil corridure to this," muttered Danny, "and we have to chross it. Divil help us if they take this turning."

The three were at the head of a cross passage. The



sound stopped. There was apparently some deliberation on the course to be pursued. The stealthy tread resumed and it was evident the soldiers were coming their way. It was no use turning back; in all probability the party had been divided into two, so as to command both exits from the central salon.

"In here, quick!" gasped Danny. There was a kind of niche in the wall, or more properly an embrasure, in which stood a growth of tropical ferns, nourished from a jet of water, which splashed and gurgled from a bank of moss. Behind this the three friends lay, one on top of another, for the lower growth was thick and there was greater safety in laying flat than in crouching. A skylight above showed the moon shining serenely in the heaven. The noise of feet advanced and in a short time, apparently an age to the hidiers, the troop was passing their place of concealment. Last of all was Abdul himself, conveniently situated to make his entrance when the traitors were overpowered. The steps went on and died away. With a sigh of relief, the three rose from their retreat and fled in the opposite direction. With such speed did they move that they ran incautiously into the main corridor and were seen by a detachment of twenty or more men. Back they turned, with about thirty yards start of their pursuers. Never did men sprint with more determination. Franklin was first in the ferny hiding-place, O'Rafferty a close second, but Tann slipped and fell headlong on the glassy tiles. This disaster did away with even the remotest chance of escape. Tann was seized and gagged before he could regain his feet. There was a slight delay; the other two began to hope. But too soon; for one of the Bashi-Bazouks (or whatever they are called in Turkish) prodded a bayonet into the calf of Daniel's leg and raised a yell, more of surprise than of pain, from the prostrate Irishman. Danny wrenched the gun from the assailant's grasp and started in to demolish



the twenty or more who stood between him and liberty. Franklin joined him and for several minutes a free fight reigned in the darkness of the passages.

The lanterns carried by the soldiery had been upset, and with luck on their side, safety again seemed likely. But in the blackness it was difficult to tell friend or foe. Franklin found himself battling with a Turk of massive proportions, who was gradually overcoming him. Elliott's athletic training enabled him to struggle longer than the comparative difference in the weights warranted. Fortune inclined to him, however; for just as he thought to give up and submit to strangulation, he felt the wall with his heels, and using it for a fulcrum, he pushed with all his force against his gigantic adversary who, at the same time getting his legs entangled in a prostrate body, fell with violence on to the floor, Franklin on top. At the moment the lanterns were relighted, and the disheartening truth broke in upon them that they had been fighting each other!

"Fate's ag'in us," said Danny. "We surrender."

A quite unnecessary concession, for they were bound and gagged, without being consulted on the subject.



## CHAPTER XIII.

IN WHICH SADLER TRIES TO OUTDO SCHEHERAZADE, AND  
FINDS IT NECESSARY TO WORK A MIRACLE.

It was about half-past eight when the disastrous conclusion of the last chapter came to pass. By nine o'clock the three were securely immured in a damp, slimy cell and left to their own reflections; and as they were much upon the same theme, there would have been very little relief in being left to each other's. O'Rafferty bewailed his hard lot in having years before been discovered transacting business in a state of liquor—it wasn't the liquor that troubled his conscience, it was the discovery. But for that one known act of intemperance he might have been parading the sidewalks of Broadway, instead of smouldering in an unhealthy, ill-drained dungeon. Franklin's thoughts were more business-like; he was studying the apartment. There was a well-defined line on the one wall, beneath which it was damp and slimy; above this line the wall was dry. This clearly proclaimed the presence of water outside. A small window near the ceiling, eight or more feet from the ground, let in a shaft of cold, pale moonlight.

"Give me a back," said Franklin to Danny, "and I'll explore our surroundings."

Daniel did as desired, and standing on his broad shoulders, Elliott gazed through the bars of the window on a scene of transcendent loveliness. At his feet, or in the neighborhood of them, flowed the waters of the Golden Horn in a dark-blue tide, relieved by a calm silver streak, glittering and swaying with the waves. Following this shining track, the glance



reached the opposite shore and lingering little on the deep shadows of the smaller buildings, rested upon the rounded domes of the mosques and the tall minarets as they caught the lavish rays of the moon.

"It's a lovely night," said Franklin. "If I had my choice of deaths and of nights to try my choice on, I would select drowning on such a serene evening as this."

Danny shuddered.

"It would almost be a pleasure to sink into oblivion in such a placid stream as this; fitting emblem of the future life."

"Hould on! If yez talk like that I'll let yez fall."

Tann laughed derisively. He had hitherto been busily engaged in making a meal off his finger-nails.

"It seems to me a fitting occasion on which to discuss problems of vital interest and future speculation. Do you believe there's a hell?" asked Sadler, addressing himself to Daniel.

"Oh! whoy trouble me wid such questions? Sure Oi'll be afther foinding out in an hour or so."

"You think they mean to kill us, then?" said Franklin.

"Think!" echoed Danny, "we're as good as dead."

"The only thing that annoys me about it," continued Elliott, "is that I haven't really learned anything about harems."

"You'll have to shorten that section of the book," interposed Tann. "Indulge in vague generalities."

"Considerin' the nearness o' dith, ye're both of yez takin' things aisy."

"Yes; we're like Socrates in that respect," said Elliott.

"Socrates!" mused Tann, "I remember him well; he's an overrated man."

"In what way?" questioned Elliott.

"He was one of those beings who get a reputation for wisdom through looking solemn and saying nothing. Others ascribed opinions to him he was too



lazy to disown, and that's how his school of philosophy was founded. Socrates! Pah! his wife was the better man of the two."

"This science is disharrtnin'," said Danny, at length; "Oi'll go mad av I hear any more av it. Won't yez spaken and say something that'll let me forget me drowin'?"

"All right! let us escape," proposed Franklin.

"How?" asked Danny.

"By breaking one of those iron bars, getting out through the window and swimming the inlet."

Danny looked up at the bars. As before explained the hole in the wall which served for light and ventilation was about eight feet above the level of the floor. It would be necessary for whoever took the playful task of breaking the bars, to fit himself into the opening. The wall, it must be mentioned, was nearly four feet thick, and the bars were at the outer end of the embrasure. The difficulty of the undertaking consisted in getting a good foothold from which the strength of the whole body could be utilized. Danny O'Rafferty was a man not to be daunted by technical difficulties. Franklin braced himself up against the wall and the giant ex-policeman clambered up on his shoulders, and thence, by means of one of the bars, pulled himself into the opening.

The incline of the embrasure rendered his position difficult, but Danny turned himself round, and with his broad back up against one side and his feet hard pressed on the other, commenced operations. He tugged the middle bar gently at first, to see if there was a weak spot, then pulled more vigorously, then swore and pulled again, and kicked and tugged till the perspiration rolled down his upturned nose, but in vain. Then he worried at it in sharp, vicious jerks in an endeavor to loosen it from the socket; but finally he was compelled to lay back and pant for breath.

"Have yez a pen-knife?" said Danny, thinking to attempt loosening the setting.



Sadler A. Tann smiled sardonically, and with a wink which was wasted in the dark, inquired, "Why not ask for a file while you're about it?"

"I ask for joost what I expect to get," retorted O'Rafferty, nettled at Tann's unsympathetic expression.

"If you knew me better you'd expect almost anything of me."

"Faix, it ud have to be somethin' devilish bad from yez that would surprise me now."

"Here's a rat-tail file," said Tann, taking one out of the air.

Danny was astounded; he was not aware that the gentleman he had the honor of being imprisoned with was a conjurer. He took the instrument, however, and commenced work on the obstinate bar, while Elliott and Tann conversed in a low whisper, as far from him as the size of the cell permitted.

Danny persevered with sundry grunts and noises, indications of effort; occasionally stopping as he fancied he detected the tread of a sentry, or the noise of a boat being rowed outside on the quiet waters.

He was deceived as to his progress several times, for he stopped filing to expand his energies on attempting to break the bar; but at length his mighty strength was crowned with success. Even then the two pieces had to be worked out of the sockets. Danny, however, was equal to the occasion, and he completed his work in a little over three minutes.

"Hooroo, me bhoys!" he cried, "there loies our liberty!"

Nothing but a swim of a mile, or less, now stood between them and freedom. Danny took his boots off; also his coat and vest, which articles of clothing would of necessity interfere with easy natation, and was about to lower himself through the window, when the door was abruptly opened and a posse of Mussulmen crowded into the cell. Franklin and Sadler were seized for the second time with as much roughness as



if they had resisted capture. Danny, seeing them in statu quo, only more so, descended from his perch and gave himself up. They were rudely dragged out of their dungeon and assisted upstairs with the points of bayonets and the flats of scimitars. Delicate attentions such as these admonished them not to linger by the way. Flight after flight of stairs they ascended, and finally wound round and round in one endless spiral. A slight delay was caused by Danny's falling, and by reason of his enormous weight, upsetting all who were behind, so that they never stopped the unexpected descent till they were heaped up in picturesque confusion at the bottom of the spiral staircase.

Each man having sorted his arms and legs from the tangle of other limbs, the party proceeded cautiously, preventing the repetition of the mishap by interposing the business ends of the bayonets between themselves and Danny.

Arrived at the top of the winding stairs, the advance threw open a low door and the main-body bundled the three prisoners out upon a high terrace, the flat roof of a tower some one hundred and fifty feet above the level of the strait. A low parapet ran round on all four sides. Despite the lateness of the hour, the place was evidently prepared for the holding of a mysterious tribunal. Three solemn looking figures sat with their backs to the west, with a guard of soldiers behind them; in front of them was a table, upon which were some coarse sacks and several pliant-looking rods.

As the prisoners reeled into the centre of this queer enclosure, their late escort formed around them, so that they were encompassed on every side.

Danny sighed for a scythe. How he could have mowed them down!—Or an axe; he could have cleared the roof of all but themselves in thirty seconds.

It was a romantic scene. The Vehm, in Anne of Geierstein, the Carbonari and other secret societies invariably met in cellars draped in black velvet and



general trappings of solemnity; but this council met in mid-air, and although the prisoners failed to see the object, object there was.

The central figure of the judicial party unrolled a silk muffler from his delicate throat and motioned for the ceremony to begin.

"That's the ould thief, Abdul himself," whispered Danny.

The turbaned gentleman on the Sultan's right, stood up and commenced an address in Turkish, which Franklin alone did not understand.

"The offence with which you are charged is more heinous than insulting the sacred shrine of Mecca, or doubting that Mohammed's coffin is suspended betwixt heaven and earth!"

Sadler laughed derisively; the speaker scowled.

"To break into a man's domestic circle, whatever its radius [here Abdul frowned and the soldiers grinned, while the orator went on, unconscious]; to trample upon the tenderest love of a man, that noble sentiment which he displays towards the sharers of his sorrows and joys, is the act of a dog of a Frank. To come between man and wives is infamy worthy of that arch-devil, Eblis."

"When you begin on devils, you don't know what you're talking about," interrupted S. A. "Eblis! Pah! he's a miserable understrapper!"

One of the soldiers punctuated Tann with a bayonet, and he came to a full stop.

"Therefore, as you were taken red-handed, or *in flagrante delicto*, which I believe is the legal term, we have nothing to do but set the machinery of torture in operation."

Abdul El pulled the orator's sleeve and whispered something in his ear. The Vizier, for he it was who was indicting them, added that it was his Majesty's will that they should be allowed to explain their extenuating circumstances, if they had any; although for his part the costumes they were even at that



moment wearing, gave the lie to any plea they might make.

This looked unfavorable, to say the least, but Tann was not daunted. He stood out, and to Danny's astonishment, said,

"We have no extenuating circumstances, but I'd like to tell you a story."

He said this as much from accident as from any other cause, although in the "Arabian Nights," a sentence of death is always a good excuse for ringing in a tale of some kind.

Abdul bowed his head with noble resignation. The Vizier blew his nose, and the guards shuffled from one foot to another, in the endeavor to get into a good listening attitude. Sadler gave Franklin a look of suppressed mirth, cleared his bronchial tubes with some vehemence and commenced in a loud voice.

"Many years before Haroun al Raschid had any idea of being born, there lived in Bagdad and other places, according to inclination, a king who had one son and several others to keep him from feeling lonesome. One hot afternoon, after eating a big dish of strawberries and cream, while the children looked on and wished they were standing in on it, he fell into a profound sleep under a plantain tree which had been growing, by permission of his Majesty, in the royal gardens, for many years past. While in this soporific trance, a Peri of beauty, seldom seen in these days, except on artistic advertisements of a popular soap, appeared to him, and with the familiarity of an equal in rank, said, 'Guzgul' (that was his name), 'eight years from now, and in every succeeding year for ten years thereafter, your favorite son will be in great peril. In one way only can you avert his fate and save him from the dangers that threaten him. Three perils will assail his existence each year, and for antidote three mercies must you grant, three culprits you must always pardon. If a malefactor has committed three crimes, he must be forgiven all.



Bow always and bite the dust before the mystic three, and the prophet will prosper you.' Whereat it came to pass that three criminals in company were always acquitted, and woe to the Caliph, woe to the Sultan who should condemn three prisoners, three times three—"

"Bishmillah!" interrupted the enraged Sultan; and waving his right hand, six sturdy soldiers bore down upon the dauntless three. Sadler and Franklin submitted without a struggle, but O'Rafferty threw both his assailants over his shoulder; in fact, if their fellows had not interposed with their bodies, it is probable that their remains would have been unrecognizable one hundred and fifty feet below. A dozen pair of arms finally encompassed Danny's downfall. The three were bound hand and foot, and laid on the long table previously referred to. The rods were next tested; and, one torturer to each man, bared his right arm for the joyful work.

"Danny," said Abdul El, with a break of grief in his voice, "I would have had thee other than a traitor."

Daniel was unmoved by the pathos of this remark; for he peremptorily commanded his Highness to go to some other place than Constantinople.

Franklin, in English, told Sadler to see he suffered no inconvenience, and settled himself as comfortably as one can on a plank, with no pillow to regulate the circulation of blood to the head. The executioners next removed the prisoners' slippers, exposing the soles of their feet to the moonlight.

There was a half minute's pause, while the brutes swished the air, and Abdul said, "Go," in Turkish.

Whiz! Swish! The rods cut the air together, and fell simultaneously brought upon the unprotected soles. Whiz! swish! swish!

Never Redskin endured the assaults of an enemy with greater composure! Blow after blow fell on the tender feet, yet not even a sigh escaped the sufferers'



lips. Like strokes of the flail the rods descended till the arms of the myrmidons fell to their sides exhausted.

Abdul gave his men every encouragement; cheered them on with promise of reward for every groan; but all in vain. He was worked up to such a frenzy by their ill success that he stripped off his outer garment and seizing a rod went at the bastinado himself. The Vizier, fired to emulation, did likewise, and the twain put forth every pound of kinetic energy they possessed; between each stroke a vicious grunt and a deep breath showed their concentration of energy for the succeeding. But they too gave up the endeavor. The victims were still motionless and mute in spite of the torture,

There the three lay like corpses, ghastly and weird in the pale radiance of night.

"They are dead!" whispered the Vizier.

"The fright has killed them," agreed Abdul, "even as the first stroke was given."

Here a hearty rumbling snore, starting low and deep, growing in force like the roll of thunder, and ending in a mighty crash, reverberated through the stratum of air. Abdul gave way to language in his native tongue at which the very stars ceased twinkling and a dusky cloud spread itself like a black veil before the face of the moon.

"Bah!" he vociferated at last, "by the beard of Ibrahim, and by the donkey which carried the prophet, their feet may be too hard to tickle, but they cannot escape death. Give them the sack!"

Danny took upon himself a cold sweat; in no other way did he reveal his dread of the fate in store, unless biting his assailants and wriggling when they tried to bag him, can be counted as a sign of dread. The others with commendable politeness assisted their adversaries in every way; in less than five minutes they were snugly ensconced in their sacks and the mouths of the sacks tied up.



Danny was now busily engaged in saying his prayers. They felt themselves seized by the middle and balanced for a brief second on the edge of the battlements, and then—out into the vacancy of space, down, down, into the darkness!

Abdul leaned over the parapet to watch his victims and hear the splash as they reached the water; every neck was craned, every eyeball strained to distinguish their descent.

The moon came out from behind a cloud, silvering the river and the roofs, flooding the fathomless blue with glory! A burst of laughter from above! Every head was upturned at once. Fifty feet away, over the Golden Horn, was a monster balloon of flaming red! Three persons were seated in the car, holding out a banner on which the legend was plainly inscribed, "Good-Bye." The clouds passed over the moon and all was dark again, while Abdul and his suite lay with their faces to the earth.



## CHAPTER XIV.

IN WHICH SADLER A. TANN SEES LONDON LIFE, AND MORALIZES THEREON.

THE balloon in which we last saw Franklin and his companions, floated down the sea of Marmora, across the Ægean and Thessaly, too high up to notice historical spots; and making for Brindisi, sped over the waters of the Lower Adriatic at the rate of forty miles an hour. There are many who would like to learn the manner in which the aerial ship was guided with such accuracy; we cannot enlighten them. Tann was, so he said, not at liberty to disclose the secrets of nature.

At Brindisi they caught the overland mail, and in thirty-six hours were waiting on the Calais pier for the departure of the steamer for Dover.

Danny was now a difficulty. Sadler objected to giving him the benefit of his infernal attendance; so there was nothing for it but to pay his passage to New York and give him sufficient capital to open a saloon. To this plan Tann was agreeable.

At Dover they despatched the policeman, per coast line to Southampton, where he could join the Norddeutscher Lloyd. He preferred that route because it gave him an opportunity to air his German dialect.

Leaving Danny to the discomforts of his ocean voyage, we will endeavor to catch up with Franklin Elliott and his Satanic companion; or, if you prefer it, dear reader, follow leisurely; as we know positively we shall find them, comfortably located at the Grand Hotel, Charing Cross, in a cosy suite of apartments,



with a luxurious drawing-room, at the corner of Northumberland Avenue, where from one of the windows Tann is gazing over the broad area of Trafalgar Square at the fountains in full play, the cold gray tower of the National Gallery, the Nelson Column and the Landseer Lions, and quietly admitting there is nothing like that where *he* came from.

"This great world of London interests me wonderfully," said Sadler, reflectively, the remark being of a soliloquial nature: "yes, I've watched the growth of it from the very first with more interest than I have given to almost any other city, except maybe it was Babylon in the far past."

"You knew Babylon?" interrupted Franklin, whose ears this soliloquy had regaled.

"Intimately," answered Tann. "It was a place, if you like; but not a marker to this. I remember in the Eozoic period this site was part of a vast marsh, many miles in extent."

"You don't tell me!" remarked Franklin.

"That was in the Eozoic formation. Then, the North Sea was all land and the Channel did not exist. Pah! you moderns think you know a precious lot about geology; you don't know anything. You string long words together, fill your heads full of 'em and fancy you're great philosophers. Now I've seen the whole business through from the commencement, and I know a little about it. To all intents and purposes the world's the same figuratively as it was at the beginning. I don't mean to say bits of land haven't been chipped off, or lakes been filled up by sands and land-slips, but the continents have stood pretty much as they now are, from the first."

"Oh, and how long is it since the first?"

"Exactly one million, three hundred and forty thousand, six hundred and eighty-four years."

"How about the world being made in six days?"

"Franklin, you're talking rubbish! how could there be such a thing as a day without the sun? You'll



know more about geology after your demise than you're ever likely to before."

"Same with other sciences," agreed Franklin.

"Yes! Talking about London, the times I used to have when the Druids had the place all to themselves! London then consisted of about six hundred huts of wattle."

"Which'll?" asked Franklin.

"Wattle, wattle, wicker-work! Then came the Romans. They were Tartars."

"The Romans Tartars?"

"That's an anachronistic figure of speech; but you understand me, they were the first to really start London. Julius Cæsar—no, it was Suetonius!—no, Agricola, built a camp on the site of the present Tower. Bless you, it's like old times to me to be here again."

"What sort of a woman was Boadicea?"

"Well, it's hardly fair of me to judge her. I made her acquaintance under most unfavorable circumstances. She had only just left the Roman rods and the Ancient British she indulged in was of the choicest."

"And Hengist and Horsa, what were they like?"

"They were Saxon sluggers. Too much given to talk, for my taste. I never left Hengist once for three days. I was working him up to massacre the males of a certain hamlet. It took a good deal of persuasion to fix his mind; but once he started on a thing, he did it well. He not only slaughtered all the men, he killed all the women and children; five thousand in all, one morning between breakfast and lunch."

"Five thousand! that's one solution to the labor question."

"Horsa was a bad-hearted man; he had no tender moments like Hengist. Did you ever hear what set them against each other?"

"No, I never knew they were unfriendly."



"Yes; they both got sweet on Rowena, who, between ourselves, wasn't half so beautiful as history tries to make out."

"Like many modern professional beauties!"

"She was red-headed, and Horsa, whose proper tribe name was White Horse—just as Indians call themselves Squatting Toad and Spotted Dog nowadays—was her shadow. He was always fooling around, until the Britons grew into the habit of looking out for the White Horse whenever the red-headed girl was about."

"Well, now," said Franklin, "how few people know the antiquity of that red-headed superstition."

"Guess not," Tann replied, not knowing to what Franklin was alluding. "Will you take a drink before dressing?"

"No, thanks, Tann."

"I will see you later." Tann walked leisurely from the room into the corridor, and then quite hurriedly down the one flight of stairs to the office. He was anxious to repair what might have proved a serious business error, and quite excitedly inquired for letters for Mr. Franklin Elliott. There were several. Sadler A. took them from the clerk and looked them over; the first two did not interest him, but the third, which was addressed in a lady's hand, did. He carefully put it in his pocket, and finding a quiet corner in the smoking room, tore open the envelope and proceeded to read it. He smiled derisively as he read, and on finishing his perusal, tore the letter up and threw the scraps of paper into the cuspidor near him.

"Very pretty reading," he thought; "very modest and yet encouraging." Another such and his young friend would be back in America in two weeks, and a Benedict in about two months. It was not his plan to allow things to drift into that channel while he could prevent it. From this on Tann took to early rising, and his anxiety for the arrival of the mails was something to witness. So Franklin



never received Miss Woods' letters. For a like reason none of the Harper missives ever reached him; and Tann, who had a way of rifling the post-boxes, managed that Franklin's letters should never reach them, breaking up a correspondence he considered dangerous to his interest. In the meanwhile Sadler A. Tann had not all the discrimination to himself. Franklin, inquiring for an attendant, despatched a cable to Jack Harper—on information pumped out of Sadler—to buy New Eggstran stock, and sell the same that day week, a deal that brought Franklin a profit of \$2750.

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About eight o'clock one evening, Sadler and Franklin, attired in the recognized evening costume, stepped out from their hotel into the Strand. There was a cool breeze blowing up from the river. Night was coming on rapidly, for the summer was dying fast and the days were shortening. A few cold, inhospitable electric lights flickered with sickly perseverance against what feeble brilliance the sunken sun still gave. The shops, protesting against the uncongenial twilight, were illumined by countless gas jets, warm and cheerful by contrast with the steely blue of the electric light, which diffused its radiance far on every side, on cabs, omnibuses and carriages.

The Londoners were making for their varied places of amusement. A hurrying couple here, the lady with a woollen shawl hung lightly over her arm, the gentleman rapidly puffing the virtue out of his pipe, showed by the unpretentiousness of their attire that they were of the middle-class and bound for the pit.

Broughams, with their lamps shining like blazing eyes on either side, whirled by with their precious freights of laces and silks, occupied by the fairest of England's fair, leaning well back into the comfortable seclusion of the cushions. Occasionally, tempted by the delicious temperature of the evening, well-dressed



couples would leave their hotels along the Strand and walk to the theatres they had decided to patronize. Snow-white shirt fronts, half hidden by the accidental folds of light overcoats, and lace-mantillas, fichus or whatever the womenkind call them, thrown over pretty heads, were no uncommon objects for ten minutes or more. After wandering undecidedly a short distance up the street, the two companions returned and groped across the obscurity prevalent in the "finest site in the world," and turned to the right up the Haymarket, which for such a broad and commanding thoroughfare was also inconveniently gloomy. "This is a decent street; let us hide it," seemed to be the spirit in which the lighting was undertaken.

At the top of the hill, there were, however, evident signs of the endless bustle and vivacity befitting the junction of the main arteries of a great city. Here was light enough and to spare, which disclosed the unfinished nature of the improvements. Right opposite, on the far side of the circus, was a vacant lot, railed around and literally strewn with old bricks and heaps of mortar. A useless building had been pulled down to make room for a more handsome edifice, and on the walls of the adjoining house were the divisions of the rooms, clearly marked, with fragments of wall papers, sickly green, and rich red and gold. One could barely grasp these details at night, but there were still faint traces of the daylight. On the next corner, occupying the whole of an irregular quadrilateral, stood an imposing building with immense stone pillars, giving a great majesty to the edifice which the innumerable lights and bill-boards, to say nothing of the weird glare and ghastly flames proceeding from a couple of chafing dishes, proclaimed to be a place of amusement.

"That's new since I was over before," said Franklin, gazing admiringly at the building we have just endeavored to describe.



"I guess it's the Grand Opera House," was Tann's comment, "taking into consideration the undoubted excellence of the site and the chaste architectural features of the edifice."

"We'll soon find out; let us cross over."

When they arrived on the pavement in front of the object of their admiration, they were surprised to find the advertising boards adorned with various pictures, some of muscular lady high-kickers, and announcements of strong men and champion acrobats.

"It's a dime museum," concluded Franklin.

"Pavilion," said Tann; "let us go in."

And they paid their money and went in. The hall was luxuriously furnished, and brilliantly aglow with countless incandescent lights. Before each seat and affixed to the back of the one forward, was a receptacle for drinks, with a rail round to save the precious fluid from being upset.

"This is all very nice," said Tann, settling himself down into his fauteil.

"Yes," agreed Franklin, "nothing is wanting now but an equally refined and pleasing entertainment."

"Oh, there's no fault to find with the—ah—entertainment, don't ye know!" put in a voice from Elliott's right.

Our two friends turned to scan the author of the remark. He was a tow-headed, vacuous-looking young man, with sleepy, washed-out blue eyes, which were fixed dreamily on nothing in particular. His mouth was open to its full extent in a vain attempt to take in the gold head of a formidable walking-stick; he had evidently been dining.

His right eye lapsed into a wink in recognition of their inspection, and he freed his mouth to address them.

"You are strangers here, I perceive; ah—Americans?"

Sadler bowed.



"Always liked Americans. Heaps o' money and no objection—ah—to spending it, don't ye know?"

"I didn't. We," said Tann, mendaciously, "are attached to the American embassy."

"That so?" asked the stranger.

"Yes," answered Tann, consoling his conscience with the reflection that all true Americans were more or less attached to the embassy. "I am Sadler A. Tann, and my friend here is the celebrated diplomat, Franklin Elliott."

"Nevah heard of him! How de do? I'm Gus—Lord Augustus Cerulan; all the waitahs, bobbies and boxahs in London know me, don't ye know? It's a howwid boah, isn't it?"

Franklin assented, although he had not a very clear idea as to what was the bore.

"Hold on!" remarked his lordship, imagining that Sadler was about to speak; "heah come the sistahs Cheddah!"

Lord Augustus' slang and affectation were a ludicrous combination, and it was with painful effort that Franklin refrained from laughing.

The sisters Cheddar, Ada and Flossie, were evidently sisters of two different families; for one was blonde, and a terror to automatic weighing machines, while the other was a pronounced brunette, of the promontory order of anatomy. The band played a brass and drum symphony, and the "histrionic twins" (vide programme) proclaimed themselves, "The dawlings of the men," and followed up their assertion by a weak dance, half shuffle and half attitude. Lord Cerulan explained that Flossie used to sell fish in Whitechapel before she took to the stage, and that Ada was a pal who had been in the floral profession. The dance over, there was dead silence, and the brass then blazed forth its protest against the favor shown the drum, and Ada and Flossie asked the gentlemen in the audience, "Would yer meet us, if we arst yer to?"



Tann in alarm asked Lord Gus, "If it was all like that?"

My lord assured him it wasn't; that they never reckoned to have more than two or three good turns an evening and that these were only fill-ups.

Tann started in horror. "And have we to sit through three hours of, 'Would yer meet us, if we arst yer to?'"

"If you like," said Gus; "but nobody listens. We simply drink and smoke until the stars come on!"

Whereupon he called for a waiter, and entreated his new friends to fortify themselves for the ordeal by having brandy and soda, or a whiskey and seltzer with him.

Soon after, a conjurer appeared and worked some inferior tricks, such as Franklin had seen done hundreds of times before. This magician unhappily pitched upon Sadler to select a card and to look at it carefully, "so's he would know't again!" Tann did so, and very successfully queered the feat, to the amusement of the audience.

"This is about as lively as a funeral procession," said Franklin, with a yawn.

Presently there was a buzz of excitement, and Augustus warned his companions to keep their eyes open, for Maudie Winsome, "the pet of the upper ten," was about to appear. Once more the band blazed out, and Maudie dashed on to the stage and shouted, in a foggy voice, suggestive of over training, "Where should we be without the chaps?" and between verses indulged in what was called "patter." This was of the feeblest kind, depending for applause on the vitiated tastes of the audience; for there was nothing which raised a laugh, outside occasional thinly-veiled shady allusions. Franklin was disgusted. The closer the lady sailed to the wind, the more the audience gave themselves over to hilarity. Sadler was surprised; he looked round the hall to see if the audience were



not of a rough type, such as dockmen or sailors. But no, they were most of them in evening-dress, and by their drawl and affected conversation evidently swells. The waiters knew them and spoke to them as my lord, or marquis, or viscount. Two-thirds of the spectators were of this class, which, if it needs must be vicious, could at least be sybaritic in its vice. They were, however, the heartiest laughers at the questionable remarks, and in their own languid way the most conspicuous personages; talking at the top of their voices whenever anything of little interest or of real histrionic ability was presented.

Sadler was staggered, and although out of tune with what he saw, secretly rejoiced. Nevertheless, that unfortunate failing of his, thinking aloud, could not be checked, and his soliloquy took the form of a tirade against unwomanliness.

"It's bad enough," he remarked to himself, "to have a man come on the stage, and in the presence of an audience degrade humanity; but for a woman to step forward in such a brazen way and—pah! it defies anything I have yet encountered in this wicked world. I'm not to blame for it, I know I'm not. If any fellow had come to me with a proposition to tempt a woman to give such a vulgar exhibition, I should have scouted the idea as absurd; as brilliant in conception, but not feasible, and here I see it done. Verily, fact is stranger than fiction."

"I'm with you, Tann," commented Franklin.

"Where are the reformers? But what good would they do? Abuses, when confined to the lower orders, are quickly detected and wrestled with; but here we have education, and birth, and breeding to deal with, and reform is difficult not to say dangerous to the reformer. What a difference there is in women!"

"It pleases me to find your views so similar to mine," interposed Elliott, who did not see the sense of letting Sadler have a monopoly of the floor.



But Sadler quickly snapped him up in continuance of the subject.

"Why, what does it say for the age in which we find a building so handsome devoted to so inferior a class of entertainment? Its existence cannot even be excused on the ground of tradition. The place is new, and this, in combination with its elegance, proves the taste for this unintelligent amusement to be increasing not diminishing."

Lord Augustus probably thought it time to say a word in defence of the institution, and drawled out, "It's a spirit of good-fellowship keeps this sort of thing going."

"Oh, is it? You must love each other very much," sneered Tann, "to run the risk of being bored to death by fraternizing here."

"Oh, come," said my lord, "a little relaxation is necessary in these go-ahead days to obviate the danger of a brain-fever epidemic."

"There's no fear of these patrons being affected by an epidemic of that nature; an isolated case is the most one can expect," interrupted Franklin.

"Relaxation!" exclaimed Tann, "you call this relaxation? If your fellow-countrymen find relief in vicious jests and semi-obscene allusions, I pity them—I do indeed. Where is the fun? Can you tell me a witty speech, a flash of repartee that has been made here to-night? Would such have been appreciated? No! a really epigrammatic turn of language, a satirical remark would fall as flat here as a lump of dough on a marble slab! The intellects of the people are stunted. Oh, it makes me weary! The world in its wickedness has carried itself to a pinnacle of cheapness, a dizzy height of tawdriness; and all I can do is blush at its of necessity being ascribed to me."

"To you?" said Augustus, in astonishment. "What have you to do with it?"

"Eh? What?" answered Tann, "what—"



"Sadler A.," whispered Elliott, "you are the most communicative devil it has ever been my lot to meet. You would shine far more brilliantly as a missionary than in your present sphere; you have mistaken your vocation."

Tann metaphorically kicked himself with his thickest reproof-boots and lamented his argumentative nature and the fondness for elementary logic, which he loved to apply to the happinesses of life as he saw them.

By the time this discussion terminated, a celebrated comique was on the stage singing a ditty, the chief attraction of which appeared to be noise; the delight of the aristocratic audience appearing to have no bounds on receiving an invitation to join in the singing of the refrain. For a few seconds the howling of voices of every variety, some like fog-whistles, others like the sound of tearing cloth, rang in the confined atmosphere of the hall. Sadler A. writhed in agony, and Elliott laughed at his evident suffering.

This boisterous refrain the audience cheered, more at its own lung triumph than at the comique's, whom they suffered to proceed, as he at least led them up to the harmonious ebullition.

"Let's go!" proposed Franklin, whose ears had not acquired the taste for such combined vociferation."

"You fellows going?" drawled Augustus. "It's not nearly finished."

"No, but we've had enough," said Franklin, rising in hot haste. Sailing up the aisle, followed by Tann, he went out into the refreshing air of the night. At that juncture Sadler A. Tann again recalled the fact that he had been again neglecting his business; so he led the way to Leicester Square, halting before a showy looking building the front of which was toned by the soft light of many colored lamps. Underneath the awning which protected patrons from the in-



clemency of weather, the glare of lights was intense; and all round was bright and inviting, although deserted, there being some attraction rampant inside. Franklin paid for seats and they entered. This hall or theatre was very much larger than the one they had just left and was crowded almost to suffocation; nearly every seat was occupied and the broad promenades were thronged with people. Franklin elbowed through the crowd, and finally was able to secure a leaning place against the back of the circle or balcony whence he obtained a view of the stage. A ballet was in progress, and as the combinations of colors and interweaving of tints and formation of groups were really beautiful, he was compelled to own that this, from an artistic standpoint, was infinitely superior to the entertainment they had been so glad to abandon. He turned his head to note the expression of satisfied interest on the faces of the spectators, but he failed to find it. A noble indifference characterized the greater number, and many never even looked at the stage.

He was still intently gazing on the Terpsichorean gyrations, when he felt some heavy personage pressing with force against his arm, and moved to see who it might be. It was a lady, who, had he been able to view her face, was very possibly attractive; but her features were disguised in a thick incrustation of paint, touched off with a profuse dabbing of rouge which took the blush rose of the cheeks up to the corner of the eyes. The effect was pleasing to the artist, perhaps, but Franklin thought it badly done. There was a powerful odor of pigment, and, in addition, a miasma of Patchouli, wafted in his face together with the breathing of brandy and soda. It made him almost faint. This work of art, who was, in spite of her attempt to hide it, young, leered at him with a wicked impudence in her eyes, and finally addressed him in French. Mr. Elliott, whose failings, when he failed, were on the side of simplicity and



nature, stared her straight in the eye with cool, exasperating indifference.

She was not the least abashed, for she answered him with a wink. Thereupon Elliott, seeing that she was of a kind too hot to be frozen by human agency, turned his back upon her charms and continued his inspection of the stage. The lady then talked at him in broken English, but he took not the slightest notice, and on the conclusion of the ballet walked away with Tann, who had been on his other side.

The termination of the dancing seemed to be a signal for a general rush to the buffet and the promenade became inconveniently crowded. Elliott, looking around to study the character of the assemblage, observed that a majority on this floor of the building consisted of sisters of the lady who had accosted him. There they were, scores of these females, with their faces painted in every violation of the canons of real complexion, white and pink, or pink all over; with carmined lips, greasy and unnatural; sickly in the disbursement of smiles to one and all; with eyes pencilled, and bright with an intense glitter, sparkling with artificial clearness; hair dressed in the most coquettish style and topped by impudently tilted hats and bonnets. Their jaunty, unreal gait and the ridiculous swing given to the rear projecting humps of millinery should have made them objects of derision, but they were in their glory. Evident *habitués*, they stalked boldly in the yellow radiance of the gas, and ogled and leered, and talked with none to check them or, at least, none who considered it worth while. Their toilets were varied and, for the most part, showy, but unfortunately a decided two-thirds of the figures lacked the consistency of slimness. They ran to fat and were, some of them, terrible to gaze upon. Sadler beheld the authorized infamy with eyes of delight, such as a devil would assume, even if he felt it not. He had betrayed himself once before that evening, and being now on



his guard, resolved, if possible, to sin in the opposite direction.

"Nice-looking girls, some of 'em," he said, almost apologetically, and looking round with an affected admiration. Whereat Franklin laughingly commented, "Sadler A. Tann, you're an infant! There is no use your attempting to retrieve yourself. Your real opinion is continually getting the better of your professional instinct. It is likely, if I had never made your acquaintance, that I should have humanly erred in most directions; but your homilies and your continual presence as a wretched example, to say nothing of outside influences of which you know little, keep me in a fairly uncontaminated condition. There is little unhealthy excitement in my life; little garish enjoyment and high-tension pursuit of pleasure; but there is a sense of restfulness and an easy take-things-as-they-come-ishness which I decidedly cherish, and I owe it all to you. Sadler, you are my benefactor, and I thank you."

They were at the head of the stairway leading out into the street, and a second time that evening they retired from a place of amusement wearied. Turning into Coventry Street, they proceeded, each buried in his own reflections, towards Covent Garden.

Elliott wondered if his letters had been received, and why Violet had sent him no replies. She was as vividly present to his sight now as she had been the first moment of their memorable meeting; maybe she was cold, he reflected; but better an inanimate marble than such creatures of flesh as he had lately seen.

It was a pleasure to him to breathe in fancy the atmosphere endeared by her presence. Is it inconsistent with the character we have given Elliott to make him as foolishly doting as other men have been? If he is a cool, unimpressionable Yankee, must we rob him of all finer sentiments and human feelings? We guess not. What would he not have sacrificed then to have held her to his heart, while he whispered, in



words, the more earnest from his accustomed reserve, the secret of his affection?—And between them was the awful compact he had made!

How often had he repented it, and how often had the knowledge of its influence in bringing them together and saving her, caused his sorrow to be tinged with gratitude!

What would the end of it be? From the moment he had met Violet the very knowledge of her seemed to destroy the charm of any pleasure Tann could offer, and the conclusion was forced upon him that he had bartered his eternity for a shadow, which cast itself over what happiness he might have experienced in this life. It was the fable of the gluttonous dog over again. In grasping the reflection, he had forfeited the reality and lost even the reflection.

If she only knew! What then?

Better to tear her memory from his heart! Yes, he would forget her! And he started in by wondering if she had forgotten him.

His speculations on Change were phenomenally successful. Selling at the highest rise, and purchasing more stock only to dispose of it at good advance, is a speedy way of making a fortune.

And for all this accumulating of money, Elliott persuaded himself, he had but one object. On his departure he wished to leave an honestly acquired fortune to charity; he imagined his heroine as the controller of his gifts, and it pleased him to fancy the respect and admiration she might, in her ignorance, feel towards him.

Tann had been doing his share of thinking, too. He had been turning over in his mind the little response his efforts met with. Elliott was his, undeniably; but he wished to fit him for his future. He would be out of place in hell, in spite of the agreement, if he remained as uniformly virtuous as he had been. Such an element in Inferno would be incongruous and inconvenient.



Added to this, Sadler A. Tann was conscientious; he did not wish to labor under an obligation. Thus far, Elliott had given all and received nothing. Tann, in addition to the deed of gift, was acquiring experience, worldly wisdom and perspicacity for evil. What was the other getting? Nothing!

If the man could only see the allurements of fast living, the delights of vice, his span of life would be rosy and cheerful; but he couldn't, or wouldn't. Verily, the life of a devil is not all straight sailing.

Through the gloomy-looking market, where heavy carts and drays were accumulating, they sauntered, unimpeded. But presently the sidewalks grew more populous, and when they turned into the Strand, the crowded thoroughfare was almost impassable.

Outside the theatres there was an assorted throng of vehicles, facing in every direction; some with the horses rearing to escape the poles of other cabs and broughams; others backing upon the pavement, to the danger of the people waiting to cross. There was a general uproar and pandemonium of yells. Bus drivers, cabmen and coachmen were shouting to each other and swearing. Touts rushed in and out among the wheels, in the endeavor to obtain cabs for clients at the street corners. Recognized commissionaires bawled for Lady X's carriage or Lord T's hansom. Rough youths, crushing and elbowing through the bystanders, sang coarse songs at the top of their voices. Added to this medley of sounds, venders of obscene literature in the gutter shouted their disgusting wares with all their lung power. Hawkers of a low journal, whose aim was to live on the love of vice, which, in the sheeps' clothing of virtuous indignation, it attacked; which dwelt on revolting details and expanded them to the joy of the depraved, and grandiloquently perorated on the suppression of evil in scathing words, belied by the undue prominence given to the vulgar head-lines, vociferated the attractions of this libel on the press.



Sellers of filthy pictures thronged the kerbs; insulting ladies by offering their wares to the gentlemen escorting them. To these were added the bedizened wretches, whose forms are human but whose souls have sunk till they might degrade the corporeality of beasts, jostling through the groups, uttering their ribald comments and graceless jests as they went, in open defiance of those present to keep order.

The Strand by night, as it might be seen by virtuous women coming from the theatres; by wives and mothers; by daughters in their virginal innocence, and by marvelling youths!

In other great cities we find some restraint on the grossness of the multitude; here, seemingly none. Authority is too virtuous to admit the existence of vice.

Ten minutes later, the decent citizens have left this main-way of viciousness, and the streets and by-streets are unreservedly given to those women who imagine every passer to be their lawful prey, whose loathsome vanity makes them the motive of every chance wayfarer's presence in those undesirable parts. There they stand, these Aholahs, in foul groups of two or three, lurking like spiders, in their dirty corners, for their foolish victims; or seizing the arms of passing youths, till the unwilling need by force to tear themselves away from their uninvited, meretricious embraces.

Sadler watched the scene long and silently. Finally he said, with a sigh, "I couldn't wish for anything worse."



## CHAPTER XV.

IN WHICH LEONARD BECOMES AN AMERICAN IN EARNEST,  
AND ARRANGES TO BECOME A BENEDICT.

It will be again necessary to do something phenomenal in the way of travelling, and in the turn of a sentence to transport the reader to the purlieus of Fifth Avenue. Who will object? If there exists a man who is indifferent to the charms of two such girls as Belle and Violet—for if the latter is not quite his style the former must be—then I say such a man had better remain behind with Sadler A. Tann in the old world. Herein, in admiration for these sweet women, lies the weakness of the pen, and also the strength of the pen—using “pen” as a collective, meaning “literature.” If an author is uninteresting in his girls, he had better lay down the quill of imagination and scribble away with the nib of statistics. Let us visit the abode of Peter Woods, in which Violet’s interests on her numerous investments are so carefully studied.

Peter was a stockbroker, and he had put his niece’s money out to great advantage, until constant handling had decided him that the original capital in some way belonged to him and his boy, Leonard.

It was a sad, unsatisfactory youth, this same Leonard. He would not go the way they desired; his “Yes, father,” meant nothing, and his “Certainly, mother,” even less.

Since his rejection by Violet he had been very brotherly, and she had grown to like him in spite of his affectation. After all, he wasn’t a bad sort. He had been partly taken into her confidence about



Franklin, and just at present he is of the firm conviction that that gentleman is "a deuced blackguard, don'ch know?"

Poor Violet! she experiences, at last, the pangs of unrequited, or rather supposed unrequited affection, and the lack of real cause never softens the pain. She had answered his letter with an overflowing heart; anxious to tell him not to fear, and yet fearing to; dying to let him know that the passion he hinted at was reciprocated, and withal, too maidenly. So the letter was despatched; a letter brimful of girlishness and sincerity, and simply friendly in its tone—even to the most experienced reader between the lines. But it often happens that the sentiment of the reader, and the wish that is father to the thought, puts an interpretation on the letter which exceeds that of the mere sentences; so it would have been—and what results might not have followed?—had Franklin received the epistle!

But Sadler had been beforehand, and the several fragments of paper blessed by her dear handwriting were consigned to the mud-run of a London gutter.

Franklin was not the only one deceived. How could he answer a letter which had never reached him? How was she, expecting the letter to arrive at its destination, to look forward to the slight of being ignored?

This is really the only reprehensible piece of business credited to Sadler A. In his former temptings, and leadings into the occasions of sin, he had behaved like a gentleman; but this interception of correspondence was mean and contemptible—and yet excusable. He knew the weakness of his case. That contract was all very well; but would it hold, supposing the paper never to have been stamped with the seal of some glaring misdeed? Therefore it was his game to bring about that misdeed, and, his worldly wisdom teaching him that the magnet of a pure love attracts a man to



proper behavior, the magnet had to be removed. "The end justified the means," said Sadler A.; a false aphorism, which is responsible for a good two-thirds of the crimes which blur the chronicles of time.

Thus it was Franklin increased in curtness and disagreeable moods towards all; and Violet became quiet, or unnaturally gay at times. She waited for weeks for the letter that never came. Every morning was she first at the breakfast table to look over the mail, and daily did she sink deeper into the mire of dejection.

So do men and women ever sink, until the soft soil of the bog rises nigh to their lips; and when hope is consigned to oblivion, their feet strike the hard ground of endurance, and helped by the friendly hand of another affection they are extricated, to live happily ever after. (Vide Fairy Tales.) That is the case with the generality of mortals, and perhaps with the chief personages of this tale; though probably they will be longer sinking and quicker rising.

But this narrative has not of a surety educated the reader to deeps of empyrean gloom, and, in short, does not appeal to lovers of the morbid. When Miss Woods had come to the sad conclusion that he did not care for her, and had added, with all humility, "why should he?" another comet flashed across her horizon, though not yet sufficiently glorious in array to dim the brightness of the first. This was a young millionaire, whose air, however, was not that of more than a competence; an air (or quality) of modesty which often is possessed in inverse ratio to the claims to be otherwise.

His name, it matters not. No reader is fool enough to think he affects the result. On second thoughts, he's a good fellow; you might just as well be introduced to him. His name is Sidney, Fred Sidney. That doesn't sound like money to you, perhaps; but to a considerable circle in New York it was synonymous with Croesus.



He had seen Belle Harper; thought she was splendid fun, and that was all. He saw Violet Woods; and threatened loss of fortune, if he persisted in loving her, would not have affected his resolution. He had made up his mind that she was the only woman for him. Hundreds have done that before him and married some other only woman; he followed their example; and Peter Woods, seeing that Leonard's chances of his cousin were of the nature best described as "remote contingencies," rather encouraged his pretensions.

We have another love affair to keep an eye on—Leonard's.

Like a detective shadowing a suspect, he prowled up and down on the sidewalks in front of the Harper mansion for weeks; and the following sample of conversation was gone through almost word for word, every morning at about eleven o'clock.

"Good-morning—ah—Miss Hahpah."

"Good-morning, Mr. Woods! It's very strange how I manage to meet you every morning about this time!"

"Yaas, very. This is my fav'rat ah (ah = hour). Mayn't I walk a little way with you, don' ch' know?"

"If it's not inconveniencing you, Mr. Woods?"

"Inconveniencing me! Ah! I say, Miss Hahpah!" This sentence usually finished up with a sigh, a languishing look and a second breakfast from the end of his cane; then the two would walk down town.

Leonard waited outside the stores while Belle purchased, and on the return journey the poor dude performed the duties of an express wagon.

He generally had a parcel under each arm, and two looped on to the first digit of each hand, so that when he perspired, he had to allow the beads to trickle down his forehead and to drop upon his well-starched bosom and elegant vest. Such devotion must in time make an impression! Such sublime indifference to the ridiculous figure he made, when he was loaded



with his packs like a beast of burden, had to meet with recognition!

"It's very good of you, Mr. Woods, to insist on carrying my purchases, when I could have them sent, or employ a messenger boy's aid," said Belle to her admirer.

"I don't see letting any messengah boy have so much pleashah, I assshaw you."

"It's kind of you to say it's a pleasure, Mr. Woods; but you don't really mean it!"

"Don't mean it! ah, Miss Hahpah, you libel me, you do, bai Jove! I could enduah any kind of mah-tahdom for yah sake,—don' ch' know?"

"It is a martyrdom, then?" laughed Belle.

"Yaas," he replied; "but ah, what greatah happiness is theah than dying in a good cause?"

"But to submit to being laughed at, as you do; it's a great sacrifice!"

"The fellahs laugh at me because they cawn't conceive anything so awnamental as I, being useful as well, don'ch know?"

Useful, that was just it! Leonard was wise enough to start his suit with an admission of brainlessness, and he courted his adored one from the plane of an inferior, endeavoring simply to be of use to her. A few weeks of this utility manœuvring and he became a necessity to Belle, as, "such a dear little fellow! so obliging! untiring in his efforts to please me!" Then the wily Leonard was absent for three days; and as Belle each morning stepped out of the house to find him not there, and walked to her shopping alone, and returned without her purchases and her "messengah-boy," the day did not seem to have its usual completeness. She scorned the idea of being in love with him; but nevertheless Jack came on the third evening to the Woods domicile to call on Leonard—and at Belle's request. He saw Violet also, and told her he had on Tuesday received a cablegram from Franklin, commissioning him to buy Anacondas, and another



that Thursday morning, telling him to sell at two o'clock.

"It's wonderful where he gets his information!" said Jack. "Anacondas were at 86 when he cabled, and at two o'clock to-day they were at par. There was a sudden boom, and everybody tried to buy and prices went up; they reached par, and since then they've dropped a point or so. How he knows what to do so far away, is simply unaccountable! He made about twenty thousand clear on the deal."

Jack had little cause to grumble; he had taken Franklin for his mascot lately, and his own dust-heap was swelled to the proportions of a young mountain in consequence.

Violet heard and sighed, and Jack, who knew the state of affairs, took her hand and said, "Cheer up, Miss Woods; there's some underhand business on, I'm sure. Franklin is not one to turn round suddenly and without cause; you've given no cause, and—its as simple as the *pons asinorum*—therefore somebody has invented a cause. It will all come right."

These visits of Jack Harper's always cheered Violet considerably, just as the honest, sincere attentions of Fred Sidney dulled her.

"How's my beau?" asked Belle, when Jack returned.

"Your beau is all unstrung," answered Jack, "has inflammation of the collar-bone and may not be about for weeks."

Leonard, whose plan had worked to perfection, was on the sidewalk next morning, and Belle's smile, as she greeted him, lent a deeper tint to his fair cheek and fluttered his heart as the wind did the flowing ends of his neck-tie.

The parcels that morning were extra heavy, and his heart was correspondingly light, as Belle laughed at him and told him she would quite like him if he would not ape the absurdities of British Swelldom.



This remark led to an interview between Jack Harper and Leonard, at the latter's solicitation.

"Belle—excuse me, calling yah sistah, Belle—tells me she would quite like me if I didn't ape British idiosyncrasies—ah—or something of that sort. What do I do that is peculiah?"

"Lots of things," answered Jack; "but the first and worst thing is that, when you're out walking, it don't seem as if it's you taking out your clothes, but your clothes taking you. That's bad and unmanly. And next thing—well, I guess your affected pronunciation is the next and most sickening of all."

"What's wrong with my pronunciation, deah boy?" asked Leonard, surprised by the accusation.

"It's all wrong. For instance, my name is Harper—not Hahpah."

"Well, I say Hahpah."

"Yes; only there happen to be two rs in the word, and if you can't show their existence otherwise, roll 'em. Har-rr-pe-rr. See? not Hahpah."

"I don't notice that I say Hahpah; the spelling doesn't suggest it. Anything else?"

"Yes: say 'peculiar.'"

"Peculiah!" complied Leonard, triumphantly.

"Yes? Well, that doesn't happen to be right. Peculiar is spelled 'ar' not 'ah.' There are scores of other things, such as 'don'ch'know.' If you've got to use some expression of that kind, stick to 'I guess!' It's a national affair and no other people can accuse us of plagiarism on it."

"Very well, I'll try and remember."

"You may think it a great thing to be a bad copy of an English dude, but a bad original of an American is a better. Try and remember these points, and you'll have a chance."

He didn't say for what, but Leonard understood.

A week passed by, during which Leonard never neglected his beast-of-burden business; finally he decided that it was time to speak to Belle, and in prepa-



ration he bearded his father in the library one Sunday evening. Peter was ensconced—what a round, seductive word that is!—ensconced in his pet chair, a large, soft-padded morocco with swivel action; he was a crusty old party, who took his rest stiff-backed, the nearest approach to comfort being the resting of his legs on another chair opposite. There was a gas reading-lamp on the table with a red shade, throwing all the light down, and in this steady effulgence Peter Woods read—or pretended to read—that weighty, weekly encyclopædia of news, the Sunday *Earth*. Leonard walked in, in a jaunty style novel to him, the result of great effort and watchfulness on his part—he was undudenizing himself. Peter looked up at him with a sniff of disdain, and continued his reading. Leonard took another chair and seating himself, placed his feet on the seat which already held his father's. Peter stared at him with astonishment, over his spectacle rims, and Leonard disrespectfully and playfully opened the conversation by saying, "Ah, there, pop!"

"What does my pride and my joy want?" said his father, sarcastically.

"A serious conversation," answered Leonard.

"D'you think you're capable of such an effort?" asked Peter.

"I am as capable of such an effort, fathah—father—as you are of respecting your exclusive offspring," was Leonard's rejoinder.

Peter growled, turned his paper inside out, read a few lines and then looked up interrogatively.

"D'you mind putting the papah—paper—down?" said Leonard. "What I am about to disclose may considerably affect you and I don't wish you to hide your emotion in a—ah, newspapah—per."

Mr. Woods was so unaccustomed to being addressed in this way that he obeyed instinctively.

"What is it?"

"Do I look as if I'd been married?" asked Leonard.



"What!" shouted Peter, jumping to his feet. "You married? You young cub! how dare you, without asking my consent? How—"

"Let up, father," entreated Leonard, "and answer the question. Do I look as if I'd been married?"

"How do I know how whelps like you look when they're married!"

"Thought perhaps you'd noticed your own appearance when you were turned off," retorted Leonard.

"I won't give you a cent. You'll have to go out into the world and work as your father did."

"I'd rather starve than be dishonest," said Leonard, unconsciously wounding his parent in his softest part.

"Then you may starve! You have wedded some upstart without my permission. You are an undutiful son, a mimicking—"

"Stop there, father—I am no longer a mimic. Leonard's himself again, so spare your abuse. I am not a Benedict yet."

Peter was a little vague as to what "being a Benedict" meant, but he simmered down and Leonard resumed.

"What would you say—? No, I won't begin that way! Have you noticed, father, now, for the last week, I have been gradually becoming American? Have you noticed I no longer speak with affectation, and that I walk now as if I didn't care whether I bagged my pants or not? and that I don't wear my arms in bows, so? Have you noticed all this, I say?"

Peter nodded assent.

"Well, what would you say to the girl who had accomplished this feat—this marvel, in one short week? A feat which you have not been able to accomplish in twenty-three years?"

"I shall be proud to offer her a typewritership," said Peter, with sublime sarcasm, but with a feeling of respect for the girl, nevertheless.

"She would throw it back with scorn," said Leon-



ard, as if a typewritership were a dollar-bill or something tangible. "But, playfulness aside, I'm clear gone, father, and I want to know what you'll do for me in the way of allowance?"

"Who's the girl?" asked Peter, thereby almost admitting consent.

"The daughter of one of the richest merchants in the city; Belle Harper's the girl. I guess—notice how I say that—'I guess' her father will spring a quarter of a million dowry; you can't do much less by me."

"I'll interview him on the subject," said old Woods, and the conversation for the time was dropped, Leonard apparently having gained a tacit consent. Next evening Mr. Woods informed his son that he had seen Mr. Harper, who was agreeable, and that he, Mr. Woods, was also ready with a quarter of a million. Leonard thanked his father, saying that he wasn't such a bad sort after all, considering what he had had to put up with, meaning himself, Leonard.

There was only one person to consult now, and that was Belle. Here Leonard grew nervous; so much so that on Tuesday morning he was not at his accustomed post, and Miss Harper vowed to freeze the slave when she next saw him. It was evening. Harper Junior and papa, as also mamma, who thought Leonard a nice, quiet boy, avoided the drawing-room, leaving it clear for Belle, who was to all appearances unconscious. Not she, however! very little escaped that cute young lady's notice, and it only needed a casual word to give her a clue to this behavior on the part of her parents and brother. One word, overheard, did all—Leonard was expected. A wink from her father to Jack told her more, namely, that the alliance was looked upon favorably by the family; and the reader may be surprised to hear Belle was rejoiced and anxious to see her dear little dude.

Presently there came a knock at the door. Leonard was there, standing outside on the rug, with his stiff



starched bosom crumpling and cracking with emotion as his chest heaved. A second time he knocked, and his knees trembled, as in tone of assumed indifference, Belle said, "Come in!"

Leonard opened the door a very little and, putting his fair hair in timidly, asked, "May I come in?"

"Didn't I say come in?" rejoined Belle, frigidly; and Leonard Woods' heart sought the company of his feet in his boots.

He slowly walked towards her, twirling his hat, and blushing the color of the lining, which was of terracotta silk. At her side he stopped. She motioned him to sit down. He did so.

A heavy silence ensued, and the ormulu time-piece ticked with jarring virulence in a vain endeavor to sound like a kitchen-clock. Apart from the tick, the quiet was so intense that Leonard's face could almost be heard twitching.

Belle smiled behind her fan, and kindly thought to give the young man a lead to victory.

"Mr. Woods!"

Leonard started up to his full sitting height, then collapsed as suddenly as if somebody had removed his vertebral column and forgotten to replace it.

"Mr. Woods," she repeated, lifting her eyes to his face, with a something in their depths which made his heart revolve like a triple screw, "how is Violet this evening?"

"Violet is very well," answered Leonard, glibly; and then stammering, "She—er—wanted to send her love to you; and I offered to take it, because—"

"Yes—?"

"Because I thought—um—anything in the shape of love to you would be so much safer in my keeping than—er—in anybody else's."

Belle, putting on a look of bashfulness and dropping her eyes till the lashes swept her cheeks, said in a low voice, "It is very kind of you to say so."

Surely, that shyness will bring him to it instantly!



Belle, however, was startled out of her equanimity by his next question, which was quite aside from the sequence.

"Miss Harper, do you think a fellow is ever justified in taking his own life?"

"Never!" answered Belle, wondering what was coming next.

"Not even in self-defence?"

"I don't see how a man can take his own life in self-defence."

"I do; in several ways. He can destroy himself to prevent somebody else doing it; or he may settle himself so as to defend himself from a lingering death."

"But what does all this mean?" asked Belle, almost impatiently.

"It means that I'm threatened with lingering death, and if I don't see my way to a cure, I'll jump off Brooklyn bridge."

"You must call in a physician: that is all that's left to you."

"I will. I want a lady doctor."

"Leonard!" said Belle, unwittingly surprised into his christian name.

"Belle!" almost shouted the enlightened Woods, junior, and he had the audacity to kiss her without permission.

Two minutes later he was seated with his arm around her waist, telling how she had made an American of him, and that though he was born in the country, he had thought it desirable to become naturalized. He was very happy. And she, who two months back would have been ashamed to own any relationship with him, really felt moved with affection for the good-natured little fellow.

"What did you mean by saying you wanted a lady doctor?"

"I meant," said Leonard, "to imply that you were the only person who could save me."

"And would you have committed suicide for me?"



"I may not be believed when I say it, but I'd have had a try for it. Oh, Belle! how is it you can tolerate a sponge-brained jay like me?"

"Because," answered Belle, "the sponge only needs squeezing to give off numbers of good ideas."

"Squeeze away, my darling Belle!—my bride Belle!"

"Your funeral Belle!" interposed she, taking the initiative and kissing him.

Jack and her father entered the room, and the former immediately danced an irreverent Scotch reel in front of the loving couple.

"Leonard, my boy, you're a lucky dog."



## CHAPTER XVI.

IN WHICH S. A. TANN HOLDS A COMMITTEE MEETING, AND  
HAS A LIVELY TIME GENERALLY.

WEEKS have passed since the conclusion of the last chapter, and Franklin has seen all he cares to see in the Modern Babylon. London for a solitary man, is the most desolate spot on the globe's surface. There is no greater solitude than isolation in the midst of millions. How truly dismal it is to sit in your sky-chamber, and looking over the miles and miles of roofs, to think that not one covers a friend!

There is depression in the very sound of the sentence. The subject would make a deliciously mournful essay—to language, what a nocturne of a blasted forest, or a moonlit desert, is to painting. Sadler passed a great portion of his time in the bar-rooms along the Strand. He had the faculty of making acquaintances, especially among the disreputable, which Franklin, in his most careless moods, never cared to imitate. Mr. Tann frequently returned from his excursions in a low state of mind. For his edification, he had taken to inspecting the condition of the slums of the East End of London, and the prevalence of wickedness and want of sanitation had worried him considerably.

The crimes he had seen committed in cold, revolting brutality had sickened him. He had always from his distant abode attempted to conduct crime on a fairly decent basis. If murder were sufficient to encompass the ruin of a man's soul, he tempted him up to that point, which once achieved, he was satisfied. But he had seen that sin, framed in the



horrors of mutilation, accompanied by every conceivable enormity, and rendered more repulsive by an atmosphere reeking with squalor and heavy with the foulest abominations of existence. His spirituality had enabled him to be present on occasions such as had never greeted the eye of mortal justice, and his supposed malignity, instead of being steeled to nobler efforts, trembled for itself with, nevertheless, a touch of satisfaction. Since he had been a sojourner in the vale of tears, his opinion of himself had risen in proportion as his estimate of mankind had lowered.

There might be degrees of wickedness in devils, he thought, but even among the dwellers in the bottomless pit, he held it a hopeless task to find one who could begin to equal, in all round depravity, some men as he had seen them.

In his misery there was a solace. His observations of the terrestrial sphere had convinced him that it was possible for him to draw off a large portion of his forces from the temptation of the many who really needed no assistance, and to concentrate them for attack on the honest and upright few.

The gentlemanly instinct, which, in spite of himself, had been grafted on him by association with Franklin, had once, at least, led him into serious trouble.

On one of his rambles, he had seen a drunken bully engaged in the playful occupation of kicking his wife up and down an alley. Sadler hated cowardice; so he went up to the man and said, "Why not kill her outright and put her out of her misery?" and the brute struck him with great force between the eyes, so that he even saw stars. He fell, and the conqueror, shod as he was with heavy hob-nailed hoofs, sprang into the air and dropped, with his two hundred and forty pounds avoirdupois on S. A.'s chest; and, out of gratitude no doubt for interference on her behalf, the former victim helped her mate and extracted handfuls of hair from our poor devil's scalp. This enter-



taining pastime would in all probability have continued till the assailants were exhausted, had not Sadler disappeared, with a strong resolution never to be umpire again in a game of that description. It was clear to his intelligence, that his influence on Franklin Elliott was negative; in other words that Franklin was, if anything, making a decent fellow of the devil, whose admiration for him was unquestionable. So absorbing was the love Sadler bore his companion; that the mere idea of separation was sufficient to draw tears to his eyes; but on this particular day of which we write, pressure of business put an end to further cogitation.

It was close on three o'clock, at which hour a momentous committee-meeting had been convened. He had been obliged to hold the council in his rooms, unknown to the proprietor, because there was a tacit understanding between Franklin and himself, that he, Tann, was on no account to return home, even on a flying visit.

Nearly all the well-known personages were there, in answer to Sadler's invitation. The worthy devil was in a state of feverish excitement; for disquieting rumors had reached him and a stormy time was more than probable.

The first of the princes of darkness to appear was Beelzebub, who, in the Christian world, is a household word and a prime favorite. He came up through a crack in a plank.

All being assembled, Tann rapped the table twice with his hair-brush. This was a signal for silence. A hush fell upon those present and they could hear the wall paper warping from the heat. Then Sadler A. Tann rose with dignity, blew his nose like an ordinary mortal—he was suffering from influenza—cleared his throat, and making as if to speak, looked around him—and didn't. There was quite an awkward pause; for Sadler in his human nature had acquired a certain amount of diffidence, which would not wear



Onak, Elmazron, Ichafus, Bastaluk and several other third-rate devils reposing upon the bed, cried, "Shame!" and Beelzebub, looking round with scorn curling his lips, said, "Lucifer is growing proud; he despises his own."

"Growing proud!" echoed Tann. "On earth I am a proverb of pride. As proud as Lucifer! It is a common thing with human beings to recommend each other to my tender mercies."

He was proceeding with volubility, when a perfect storm of hisses resounded through the apartment. Sadler A. took off his coat and rolled up his shirt-sleeves in sign of readiness for battle, but vacated the rostrum in favor of Beelzebub.

"It seems not enough," continued the prince, "to degrade himself by his truckling, but he needs must—"

"Needs must when the devil drives," murmured Tann, *sotto voce*.

—"Insult friends and comrades with whom he has been associated in evil and the misery necessary to it, for several thousands of generations. It is cheap valor—very cheap. Now, as our late friend has, from some unknown cause, taken unto himself the manners and insolence of a recognized humorist, it ill befits us to reach our end by narrowing circles, when a straight line, as defined by our ancient colleague, Euclid, is the shortest distance between two points. Let us follow our straight line to its conclusion. There are times, my brothers, when the greatest diplomacy is to say a thing in the fewest words. One of the best authorities on the subject, whose place in the pit of Tophet is several sizes too small for his gigantic intellect, has told me that the summit of diplomatic eminence is to be attained by speaking the strict truth with a stolid countenance and an expressionless eye. Why?"

Nobody thought necessary to answer. Who ever interrupted an oration by replying to what an orator intended to reply to himself?





T.E.







"Why?" continued Beelzebub; "because the most common failing of humanity is doubt. Faith is almost an unknown quantity; and doubt, therefore, suspects truth and looks into the face to detect a lie. And it is a well established fact that unmistakable innocence of expression is considered the most convincing proof of falsehood. Herein I speak of liars of the first rank, therefore—"

Cries of "Order!" "Get on with the subject!" "Hurry up!"

Sadler's good humor seemed to be having its effect. Still Beelzebub remained unruffled; but there came a knock at the door, and Sadler called out, "Who's there?"

"Gentleman in No. 25 wants to know if you'll be so good as to make a little less noise," answered a voice. "He's very ill."

This threw a damper on the proceedings. Moloch was furious at the idea of being dictated to by mortals. Eblis was for adjourning to twenty-five, and there raising general pandemonium. Sadler, however, waved his hand for silence, and requested the subdued yet excited crowd to remember that they might get him turned out of the hotel.

Beelzebub then made another start, this time in lower tones. "I have hitherto been interrupted in all my approaches to a definite charge against Lucifer, our once revered chieftain; but time presses, and during our enforced inaction virtue may be making vast progress throughout the world. Lucifer!" and in his earnestness he lapsed into the heroic, "thou hast neglected thy business! Thou art under the thumb of a mortal whom thou pretendest to seduce into the ways of vice! Thou no longer manifestest interest in our manœuvres and machinations, and Hades is going to the dogs. It would not surprise us to hear that thou feelest sorrow for the iniquity thou hast accomplished in the past, and that thou wert setting up for a saint."

"Worse men than I have set themselves up for



canonization honors," said Sadler, unconsciously dropping from his commonplaces.

"Thou," went on Beelzebub, "hast little heart in thy work; but goest about like a crack-brained mortal, drinking deep of the fountains of vapid enjoyment and tinselled luxury. From clime to clime thou flittest, thinking of naught save pleasure; while we, your friends, writhe in neglect and immortal torture. Thou mayst object, and will, withal, that, as thy sufferings are immortal too, so can they never leave thee. But we are not fools; no pangs so great but may in excitement be forgot. Thou hast lived in a delicious whirl of enchantment; it's time 'twere ended. At intervals so rare that they are useless, thou makest efforts. Thou presentest temptation to the one soul to which thou hast devoted thy time; but more often thou moralizest like a virtuous philosopher; and if truth must be spoken, the man thou wouldst influence, possessing the stronger mind, doth bend thee to his will. Ah! thou art weak; no longer fit to rule a community of colossal strengths and mighty intellects like this. If thou wert deposed from thy high estate and set beneath the meanest devil of us all, yet would the rank be too elevated for thee!—thou truckler, thou weak-time server and helpless invertebrate! I have spoken."

Beelzebub seated himself on the dressing-table, and an ominous silence ensued for several seconds.

Then Tann stood up.

"Before I enter on any defence," he announced, "I wish to know whether any one else desires to run our infernal organization; if so let him stand up, and if I don't, metaphorically speaking, tear him into a thousand fragments, I am no longer the old Satan you used to admire and dread."

The reader must understand that it is no longer Sadler A. Tann who is speaking, but that gentleman divested of the weakness and timidity of his flesh and defiant as the once brightest angel of all—Lucifer.



The effect of his words was instantaneous! He immediately regained the respect of his auditors; and the after hearing given to him was that of inferiors to a superior, not of equals to equal.

"You may have heard," continued Sadler A., "how one man went, full of belligerence and firm resolve, to knock the stuffing out of another, for some offence known to him, the one, alone; and how the other, verily turning on him, did, forsooth, reverse the process, and did mash the assailer into an unrecognizable pulp. Then, when victory abode on his side, he did ask his foe the wherefore of his attack; and when the wherefore was explained, the victor said, 'I am not the man you thought me.' Wherein he spake the truth; for neither was he the offender, nor was he the man his erstwhile attacker took him for; else the conflict had inclined the other way. So if any demon here cares to take the gage I throw down, I will first even render him so stiff an account that his own mother, had he one, would not recognize him; then will I explain the motives for my conduct and offer excuses, having first proven the excuse the outcome of innate politeness and willingness to satisfy insatiable curiosity, not of timidity or sense of guilt. Beelzebub! what say you, will you take the gage?"

Beelzebub heard it, but he heeded not.

Sadler, however, did not appear to notice his omission; for, sinking back into his mortal insignificance, he touched the button of the electric bell, and said, "Boys, make yourselves invisible."

This they did; and when, in answer to the ring, a waiter entered the room, he saw nothing of note, and nobody save Tann.

"Bring me a bottle of the best brandy and a dozen of soda," ordered Sadler.

The waiter bowed and retired.

"My throat gets parched and dry if I talk long," said Tann, "and as I have an oration of some length before me, I want to start fair."



The other infernals failed to see the necessity for liquor and drinking. If a pleasure, it was one in which an etherealism could not participate. A spirit cannot drink; there's no place to pour the liquor into.

The waiter returned, placed the several bottles in front of Tann, and again retired. Sadler helped himself to a copious drink, in which he toasted "Continuous prosperity to Hades," coupling the toast with the name of his honored friend Beelzebub.

Lubricated, he erected himself into his most imposing attitude and commenced, "Brothers, the innuendoes and open accusations levelled against me have given more pain than the fabricators wot of. I have been absent from your midst but a few short months, and already the cardinal sins of envy and covetousness have been at work. You turn your weapons against yourselves and me, the inventor. This is the basest ingratitude; this it is which affects me more than the mere offence—the thought that our centuries of brotherly love are futile after less than a year of absence. Oh my brethren, as one Shakespeare has it, 'Blow, blow, thou winter wind, thou art not so unkind as man's ingratitude!' and I presume that the same applies to ingratitude of demons in a still more marked degree."

This pathetic opening created quite a sensation. Muloch would have blown his nose had he been human; Bastaluk trembled with emotion, and Beelzebub, the arch-rebel, looked mournfully at the brandy bottle. The pause for effect having attained its purpose, Sadler A. proceeded:

"The chief accusation appears to me, as well as I can sift it from the heterogeneous rubbish my colleague Beelzebub hath twaddled, to be that, firstly, I have neglected my business. This is absurd and childish! Why? In the first place, as director of the company I am not compelled to do menial work. I am simply forced, by the exigencies of my position, to see that the labor of the subordinates is effective



and unceasing. I have studied the science of organization thoroughly in my terrestrial sojourn, and on my return to our own domain, important alterations may be brought about in the composition and classification of our cohorts. Again, wherein have I wasted my time? The ramifications of human desires are a never-ending study; however much we apply our intellects to this engrossing subject there is always more to learn. The changes rung on the bells of human nature, though not infinite, are as numerous as the capacity for design of a kaleidoscope. For your sake, and for the advancement of perditionizing principles, I have sunk my pride; and you who know the extent of my pride, cannot fail to comprehend the greatness and mortification of that sink. I have been to school. I have drunk the elixir of knowledge from the fountain-head, and here, without disguising the fact or striving to soften the blow, I tell you we are not living up to our reputations.

From the beginning of time, humanity has been advancing. Apparently, there is no end to its progress, and it seems each step forward is to the last advance, as the total advance to the very beginning of all. From such a race as this, information is to be gleaned. You devils who tempt from afar, are applying the methods employed in the Eocene period to the men of the newest formation; and what is the result? You fancy you damn men—excuse me, gentlemen!—fancy, I say; but you are woefully mistaken. The majority damn themselves. Your paltry suggestions assist a few who are foolish and childlike in their nefariousness; but to the great body of men you are harmless. This is news to you; and it is possible you doubt what the old Father of Lies tells you; but for once his words are truthful. You have but a faint conception of the depth and extent of human wickedness. I have seen and read of crimes which would freeze the ichor of your insubstantialities. I cannot describe the foul details of some mur-



ders and assaults. I cannot, without bringing the blush of modesty to your cheeks, dilate upon the complications and diversities of almost universal licentiousness; some of it seeking the glare of publicity and striving for the palm of loathsomeness; more, equally disgusting, unknown to the multitude from the dust of hypocrisy thrown in its eyes. I cannot go into special cases of fraudulencies, merely the necessity of positions of trust, yet entailing the ruin of thousands; nor the forgeries and corruptions of justice. Ah, there is only one devil paramount now, and he heeds not our opposing interests; I refer to self-gratification. I have had my eyes opened; there are reasons for this. Education gives men greater facility for wrong-doing and more refinement in guilt, which of course adds and not detracts therefrom. I have visited the temples of public education, where the absurdities of the classics are grafted early on the mind, and I have noticed a large percentage of the youths boasting of an atheism which they consider clever. Those who do not profess infidelity, practise it; they consider themselves animals, and endeavor by the conduct of their lives to verify their opinions. Thus to most there is no deterrent; no belief in a future, and no belief in *our* existence. I assure you, gentlemen, I have had men tell me to my face that I did not exist; and by logical inference and deduction, convince me not only that I wasn't, but that I never had been. If it were possible to the carping logician, he would deny eternity itself; so far, however, the possibility of such an absurd denial has fooled their willingness. The mind which asserts there must have been a beginning, and endeavors to draw a picture of the chaotic void in which the inceptive germ performed its vivifying manœuvres, is apt to drift into drivelling lunacy. It is easy to commence with a void—if you wish to grant a commencement—but if one reject the void, what then?

“Thus, then, it will be observed that the world—



speaking in a general way—is wicked; and why should it not be? What is your idea of the man who, not believing in a future life, consents to make himself miserable in this by the pursuit of virtue? for virtue without an object is—I can find but one monosyllable for it—*rot*!

“Love good, not because it is profitable, but because it is beautiful! What a noble sentiment, brother devils! The person who raises his hands in unbelieving piety and denies the existence of a superior being, makes himself the arbiter of goodness! One mortal’s opinion is as valuable as another’s, and once the sentiment I have related spreads its pure wings over humanity, individuals will raise their own standard of good; and as names are apt to lose their original significance, present vices may be future virtues.

“What then is left for us? Shall we merely rest until the autumn is near and then rise up to reap the harvest? or shall we expedite the ‘fall’? If society is in such a corrupt state that it is merely held together by the bandages of preservatory instinct, how easy would it be for us to tear away these ligatures! I will show you. Vice may be divided into two genera, gilded and squalid. In degree of viciousness the gilded takes it; but the squalid, in addition to its other traits, comprehends a hatred for the gilded; not because of its inherent badness, but because of the guilt. Once the poorer variety gets the upper hand, all barriers will be broken down and vice will no longer hide in corners or blush for itself, but will walk in the broad glare of its own indecency. The true road to this desirable end is through man’s passions. New modes of pandering to them must be devised, until the slime and sensual refuse of licentiousness, instead of being condemned, are lauded, and men and women vie with each other in leading vitiating lives. I have no suggestions to offer which are not already ripe in the



minds of many mortal men. The abolition of marriage attained, then will be the millenium of vice. You are surprised; you never thought of this! Neither did I think of it; but I gleaned the idea from an intelligent, well-educated man whose sole desire was to break down the trammels of superstition. It may be argued from the other side that the abolition of matrimony will do away with our most successful commandment; but so long as a sin condemns to hell, what matters the degree of it? This measure once attained, we can look forward to a realization of our long cherished hopes; but in furtherance of such an end we must labor. You must educate yourselves up to the standard of man and then tempt him as an equal. And I have provided for your curriculum. You will find in my trunk literature by writers, secular and clerical; some exposing developments possible from the universality of infidelity from the point of advisability; others tackling the hydra on religious grounds, and showing how and in what disgusting complications it must terminate. Read these and ponder over them. Whichever side of the question you study, the seed of noble suggestion sown in your mind may grow into plants of self-conceived devilishness.

“Ponder on this; reflect and conjure up visions of riot and lasciviousness, no longer confined to dark ways or the privacy of brilliant salons, but widespread in streets, and theatres, and hotels, and dwellings. The general reign of Cybele and the worship of Isis is at hand! All depends on your efforts, my brothers. Gird on the armor of night; arm yourselves with the cardinal sins; train yourselves as for a battle that may be long and arduous, but look forward to an easy triumphal march to victory and the final uprearing of the banner of yours, in time and eternity, Satan.”

The effect was electrical. A thousand hands were stretched out for his, Beelzebub's pair in the van. A



thousand devilish voices were raised in a mighty but inaudible cheer, which shook the Grand Hotel to its foundations, and was felt as far east as the Temple Bar Memorial.

Tann had triumphed.

Then the meeting dispersed through the keyhole and the cracks in the floor, and down the gas-burners, and up the flue, and Sadler was left alone.



## CHAPTER XVII.

IN WHICH THE READER GETS CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN  
HE EXPECTS.

WHEN "coming events cast their shadows before," it implies that the sun is to rearward. If the light is in front, then coming events cast their shadows behind. This is far more sensible, if an event wishes to come without giving notice of its appearance; and as most important occurrences are totally unexpected, it follows either that the shadow had gone aft, or that, if it were to the fore, those who were looking for it were gazing the wrong way.

There's only one other way out of the difficulty, which is that the event didn't cast any shadow at all; being nocturnal in its approach, or coming at a time of day when shadows are at a premium.

Oh, if we could but live our lives as we start in! How fresh and innocent we are in those days of our too-young-to-be-otherwiseness! How happy and free from care is that festive period when our parents are wrestling with six-foot troubles and dogged perseverance! We have nothing on our minds so long as we have plenty on our stomachs.

Indigestion, fell demon of the latter days, is to the infant machinery unknown. What bliss to be able to absorb limitless quantities of pie, green apples and roast pork, without fearing that sword of Damocles, Indigestion! That bliss is only to the young! What then is the moral? Load up to the muzzle with pie, and when in after years your capacities lie not pieward, rejoice in the fact that you put in good time while the driving wheels were unclogged by disease!



Great Britain again! We keep travelling across that Atlantic streak, but our period of rest is coming, and this was the coming event we suggested as foreshadowed by the pairing off of our sub-heroine.

Franklin's letters remained unanswered, and he who in company never showed how he felt, had, when alone, or with Tann, his periods of depression all along the meteorological coast-line of observations.

The weather chart, as indicated by him, was to be read as dull, variable, with a tendency to showers, local."

Tann, our good, thoughtful, tender-hearted Sadler A., saw the gloomy misfits come over his friend, and he unconsciously took his tone from the atmospheric conditions.

They were setting out upon a midday ramble, when Tann, observing the usual gloom settling down upon his companion, endeavored to rouse Franklin from his moodiness; but with his usual adaptability for the wrong course, he asked what was the matter.

To a man of Elliott's disposition sympathy undesired is unappreciated. Tann did not think of this; hence the answer, "That's my business," fell upon him like a hot potato on a Persian carpet, utterly uncongenially.

He recovered from the shock, and placing his arm in Franklin's next, said, "Cheer up. She's not worth it."

"Not worth what?" asked Elliott, sharply. "And who's not worth it?"

"She!" answered Tann.

"What are you talking about?"

"D'ye think I'm a fool, Elliott? Think I don't know you're disappointed in that girl?"

"What girl?"

Sadler A. laughed. "Very good acting, my friend, but I'm up to it. Miss Woods is not the paragon you imagined."



Franklin said nothing to this ; he was compelled to own himself deceived.

“ You’ve written to her time and time again and she has scorned to reply. You lavished upon her all the love of your young, hitherto untenanted, heart, and where are you now? Left! Pah! forget her. Be gay, my friend! no woman is worth breaking a heart over. Dive into the whirlpool of society; seek oblivion in the vortex of dissipation. Have you ever met my simile before? In the outer circles of the maelstrom you whirl round with the frantic motion of a new experience; and as you grow more involved in pleasure, the circles narrow and soon you are engulfed in the peaceful pivot of the eddy.”

By this time they were passing quite a crowd assembled about a window devoted to the features of professional beautydom. Franklin’s small fund of curiosity was aroused; but his dislike for gregariousness was impelling him to move away, when Sadler checked him by holding on to his arm.

“ That’s a new one on me!” said a well-dressed youth, as he moved away.

“ Very pretty,” said another; “ I wonder who it can be. I’ve never seen the face before.”

“ Stay,” whispered Sadler into Elliott’s ear; “ I’ve caught a glimpse of such features as will give you a severe shock.”

“ Thunder!” laughed Franklin, “ it’s got to be a very poor apology for a face that can shock me.”

Tann, without hearing his remark, dragged him into the little knot of spectators close up to the window. Photographs of all sizes, and of all kinds of personages met their gaze; statesmen, actors and actresses, jockeys, royalties, celebrities of every class were mixed in the most republican fashion.

Tann saw what he wanted almost immediately; and completely satisfied, he turned his sinister glances to an inspection of his friend’s face. Franklin passed from one beautiful countenance to another with artis-



tic admiration, but sublime indifference, and was making ready to turn away when a surge of the throng carried him along to another portion of the window, directly in line with the picture which had attracted Tann. Franklin saw it; stared, rubbed his eyes, looked again and again, and said under his breath, "What a likeness!"

There was neither paling nor biting of the lips, nor any sign of intense emotion, to Tann's interior disgust.

Franklin was not long in extricating himself from the press; Tann was close on his heels. The former's first manoeuvre was to enter the shop; Fidus Achates, or whatever may be the antipodes of that expression, following.

"Where did you obtain that picture?" asked Elliott of the shopman, pointing to the particular one.

The proprietor supposed it came to him in the usual way, from one of the photographic galleries, Franklin was not satisfied; but he purchased it, and then asked if there were any more in the stock. There were. He bought the lot.

"Did *you* notice the likeness, then?" asked Tann, as they left. "I guess the man in the store believes it's your wife, or sister, or somebody who's been photographed and exhibited for sale without your permission."

"Confound their impudence!" growled Franklin. "She has been photographed here, and the blackguards take advantage of her absence in America to flood the market with her features. Out of respect for you, Tann, I don't often swear, but on this occasion even that respect cannot prevent me ejaculating,—it's a damned shame!"

"How d'ye know it is Violet Woods?" asked Sadler, as if in ignorance of the why or the wherefore of the whole affair.

"Yes! how do I?" agreed Franklin. "Perhaps



I don't. This may be a case of double, without the accompanying toil and trouble."

"I'll find out for you if you wish me to! It's just possible it is the lady of your heart."

Franklin made no reply to this. The singularity of the occurrence induced reflections. Sadler, on the other hand, grew talkative over the memories this physiognomical coincidence recalled.

"There have been numerous instances in history of a striking likeness getting men and women into trouble. Now I've seen everything since the beginning of time, and I've small doubt that I could astonish your nineteenth century callousness. The first case I can call to mind is that of Romulus—No! there were two before that, but not important. You are aware that truth is said to be stranger than fiction. It's a wrong statement, for this reason; namely, that everything in fiction has been done in fact, and that there is no fact which has not been feigned in fiction; therefore the two divisions in narrative are equal in strangeness. Agreed, eh?"

Franklin gave an uninterested grunt of assent, and the talkative demon rattled on.

"History has it that Romulus was a fratricide, that he killed his brother in the white heat of passion. History is wrong. The truth about it is this. Romulus was in love with a beautiful Sabine girl by the name of Mursa, and he had every reason to believe that the girl was crazy about him. Romulus' brother was very like him (don't say chestnuts before I've finished), so like him that Rom was obliged to have a mole on his neck to distinguish him from Remus.

"One evening, after a hard day's work mixing mortar for the walls of Rome, Romulus changed his working toga for his dude attire, and set out with his heart full of happiness and his eyes of lime, to meet his beloved Mursa. The trysting-place was at the foot of a solitary pine which crowned the now Celian Hill. Happy Romulus setting out for the meet!



Unhappy Romulus returning out of the hunt! As he drew near the pine a startling sight interfered with his inspection of the horizon. There he beheld his Mursa with her tender mouth riveted to Remus'. The likeness between the brothers was so extraordinary that for quite a minute Romulus believed he had not been late for his appointment; but the stern reality was there. He felt for the mole on his neck, and knew that it was Remus who was kissing his best girl.

"Remus had been engaged in laying snares for rabbits, when Mursa, thinking him his brother, put her hands over his eyes, and said, 'Guess who it is!'

"'I guess I can't,' answered Remus; and the girl kissed him. That was the precise moment in which Romulus had happened on them; had he remained he would have heard Remus say, 'Girl, you are laboring under an optical delusion! I am not my brother.' But he fled down the hill on to the Aventine, with the darkness of despair in his soul, and a grief filling his heart as the sea wrestles in mighty revolt amongst the subterranean caves. Lifting up his right hand to heaven, he swore by Jove, to do an act of great sacrifice. 'I will not stand in my brother's way,' he said, 'and as I cannot live without her, I must die by my own hand.'

"That night he rose from the turf on which he was lying with his brother Remus, and went to the corner of the tent for his jack-knife; then he laid him down on the bed again and buried the knife in his heart. When he awoke in the morning Remus was cold and stiff by his side; Romulus turned pale with a horrid doubt; he looked for the birthmark; the mole was not on the dead one's neck! He had killed his brother in mistake for himself!"

Sadler had finished his story; he looked at Franklin closely, and suddenly seized his hand, "Franklin," he exclaimed, "you are the first one who has heard that through without laughing. I thank you."



He was really grateful; he resolved in future to unburden himself of numbers of historical secrets; but the more important matter returned to him and he said,

"What about this affair? Shall I root round and see if it is the same girl?"

"If it is not asking too much of your good-nature," replied Elliott.

"Not at all! I can't do too much for you," said Tann, affectionately.

"Thanks!" from Elliott. "See you again at dinner," and for the time they parted.

Sadler was not detained in his room more than five minutes; just long enough to put an extra touch to his variegated-dots-and-arrows, white-on-a-purple-ground cravat, and an invigorating brush to his close-cropped hair.

Leaving the hotel at a rapid, swinging gait he crossed Trafalgar Square, and thoroughly at ease on the score of his locality bump, climbed the Hill of the Haymarket, turned left at the top and hailed a hansom.

Why he should have walked thus far when he could have ridden from the outset, is one of those problems incapable of solution even by the person who gives rise to them.

Arlingford Mansions, Hyde Park, or something that wafted earwards with a speaking likeness to it, was the direction given to the cabman. It was beginning to rain, so Sadler had the glass front put down he was very careful of his clothes), and secure from liquid interruption, he smoked and pondered till the hansom pulled up at an imposing free-stone edifice, cold and cheerless of aspect, being built on straight lines and unrelieved by artistic curves and bas-reliefs. There were, however, elegant flower-stands on the window-sills, and also iron balconies and railings lavishly ticked off with gold paint.

Sadler alighted and paid the cabman. He threw



away ~~his~~ cigar, wiped his mouth with a red silk handkerchief, twisted up his thin black moustaches till they pointed like twin capillary finger posts "to heaven;" and rang the bell, which was inscribed "Visitors," in well-polished brass work.

A noble looking person, in knee breeches and silk stockings opened the door. Sadler entered, and asked the flunkey to take his card up to the lady of the house.

Now the term "lady of the house" is in very bad odor, as being chiefly employed by advertising agents and other fellows who carry samples of Mr. Soanso's starch or Farm fed-potatoes, superior to any ever before thrown upon the market; hence Jeames grew wary.

"It's no use takin' the card hup, she's hout."

"Well," said Tann, "if *you* won't take it to her, I must."

"Come in, Mr. Tann!" said a very sweet voice from a room somewhere on the right of the hall; and Sadler, with a glance of triumph at the discomfited servant, passed on into the chamber whence the voice had issued.

Jeames repaired to the servants' hall in utter mortification, and gave it as his opinion that it was "some low American friend of the missus," and also, "that everything that went on in the house wasn't sub rosy."

That wasn't quite what he meant to say, but what significance his words lacked his tone supplied.

Tann did not remain long; he was "in a hurry to get back to dinner," and, "really would have been very pleased to stop, but Franklin would expect him and Miss Woods must excuse."

"Very well," she replied, as she stood with him in the hall, "I'll excuse you this time, but in future no ceremony."

"No ceremony!" echoed Tann.

"When you call again, bring Franklin." And she



laughed her silvery, light-hearted laugh, which was always the foremost of her charms.

Franklin and Tann met according to their custom at the table d'hôte. The former, ignorant of the latter's recent expedition, could not very well open the conversation on that subject; so Sadler was obliged to work round to himself.

"Very decent soup this!" said H. S. Majesty, after inoculating himself with the contents of a spoonful of *purée* of tomato.

"Um!" answered Franklin, affirmatively.

"Wretched day, it has been, hasn't it?"

"Ah!" replied Mr. Elliott.

"I had business west, so I've been out in it."

"More fool you!—Halibut and Lyonnaise potatoes! the usual claret!" These last statements to the waiter.

"It was in your interest that I risked inflammation of the lungs."

It was clear that Franklin was not inclined to be talkative; also that the leading up to the subject of interest was not to be accomplished without assistance. There being no assistance, Tann had to dispense with leading up.

As the fish was being cleared, Sadler leaned across the table and hissed (those sort of fellows always hiss)—

"I've found out all about the pictures."

"Bring me some rare roast beef.—Have you?" said Franklin, calmly.

"I have!—I want some boiled mutton and capers—and vegetables!—We are not mistaken."

"Not?"

"No, it's not a case of double."

"That being so, the lady of the shop-window is Miss Woods."

"It is."

"More bread, please."



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### IN WHICH MISS WOODS IS AT HOME.

THE calmness with which Franklin combined his orders to the waiter and the questions affecting his life, dumbfounded Sadler A. Imperturbability goes a long way, both in reality and in type; and Tann, although he had been studying the art of callousness for weeks and months, from Franklin's example, had never yet on any one occasion been able to disguise his sentiments. The secret of success, in business life, at least, rests with the man who can tell a lie as if he knew it was the truth.

A few days after the foregoing events, a note arrived at the hotel for Sadler A. Tann, Esq., informing him that Mrs. Fanfield was at home on Thursday, from three to five.

Elliott learned without inquiry that Mrs. Fanfield was Miss Woods' chaperone on this side, and that it was in reality Miss Violet Woods who was at home.

"You'll come, of course," said Sadler. "It will be a good opportunity to ask why your messages were never acknowledged."

"So it will," agreed Elliott. "By the by, Tann, I don't often interfere in others' affairs, but at the Art Club yesterday, I heard slighting remarks made about Miss Woods—in fact, accusations. I don't know whether the depreciation of the lady is your doing; but if I find it is, there will be a cyclone around your anatomy for a time."

"Franklin," said Sadler A. "these reports have grieved me as much as you. Miss Woods is spoken of as 'the American adventuress', and as 'the Woods



woman,' and her name is bandied about on the tongue of scandal as if she were a notorious lax-moraled beauty! I can imagine your feelings."

"Never mind my feelings!" said Elliott. "What sort of a woman is this Mrs. Fanfield?"

"She's as much of a mystery to society as Miss Woods; there's a rumor that she keeps a quiet gambling-hell for ladies, and I heard at the Grantham that a certain nobleman is the backer of the establishment."

"And you allowed them to say it?"

"Certainly! I had no right to interfere on my own account, neither had I on yours. You're not her husband, and you're not even engaged to her."

"No, that's very true!"

"Any interference would have seemingly proved their lies, and her reputation would have been involved."

"Yes! Well!" said Franklin, "we shall, or I shall, find out all I want to on Thursday."

It will be seen from this that Miss Woods was regarded as one of those beautiful adventuresses who flash, comet-like, across the azure of society at intervals, and as suddenly disappear. It certainly was a peculiar fact that at her receptions—the male sex was ever in an overwhelming majority.

Society wondered whence this new comet came, and arrived at the vague conclusion—America; and marvelled how in less than a week after her appearance, most of the magnates of aristocracy, and the lions of art and literature, had sought to worship at the feet of the unknown beauty. The tribute of the peers was certainly not calculated to enhance Miss Woods' or Mrs. Fanfield's moral reputation, and thus it was probable that the wives of many of them refrained from calling or leaving cards. When nothing is known concerning a person, evil is invented. Scandal is a spontaneous generation! In trifles, men and women are given the benefit of the



doubt; but where the finger of scorn finds no excuse for pointing, the tongue of detraction endeavors to frame one.

Had Miss Woods been merely *en passant* through London, her personality and motives would never have been questioned; but a house was taken and a house, too, of fabulous rental, and the deduction was—money. Nobody knew her and yet in less than a week everybody of note was on visiting terms!

On Thursday afternoon Elliott and Tann walked up the white marble steps and launched themselves upon the velvet-piled floor of Miss Woods' *salon de reception*. Miss Woods was seated in the centre of a masculine circle of admirers. She saw Franklin as he entered, and pulled her skirts on one side to make room for him; but this specimen of diplomatic humanity bowed, and was glad to see her looking so charming, etc.; and not heeding her invitation, passed on to talk to a fellow attached to the American embassy. Miss Woods bit her lip with annoyance, and a Colonel Fitz George, who was making desperate love to her, scowled at the person who had sufficient influence to destroy her composure.

Tann, who had no motives for indifference or assumed unfriendliness, dropped into the position on the settee which Franklin had refused, and was soon deep in animated conversation with Fitz George, Viscount Westonbridge, Lord Spongee, and two or three more "bucks." The discourse was hardly of a kind to interest a lady, but Miss Woods endured it with every symptom of pleasure.

"I had a devil of a time of it at Goodwood," said Fitz George; "that weedy looking filly of yours, Spongee, Muscatel, let me in for a nice sum."

Viscount Westonbridge laughed. "If you bring off any more *coups* of that kind, Spongee, you'll have the whole of the peerage in the workhouse."

Spongee blushed; Muscatel was a standing joke on him. He had given this tip to all his friends as a



"moral," and it had been ignominiously "beaten off."

He made his old time excuse on this occasion—"The mare must have been got at."

"And what does being 'got at' mean?" asked Violet, whose knowledge of turf slang was of the slightest.

"'Got at' means hocussed or drugged. The bookies get some blackguard to dose a horse, or to give it a bucket of water before a race, and of course it can't win, and we drop our shekels."

"And is it possible," asked Tann, "that men are so dishonest as to victimize their fellows in this way?"

"Oh, yes!" laughed Fitz George; "all's fair in love—and gambling."

"Then that proverb about honor among thieves is a mistake," said Tann.

"I don't see how your deduction applies," said Fitz, dryly.

"Don't you? That's strange. I always understood that professional gambling necessitated thieving."

"Plucking pigeons!" interposed Spongee.

"I don't know what technical term you have for it," resumed Tann. "As far as I can see it only requires a very ordinary amount of intelligence to win on the turf."

"*You* certainly ought to win, if that's all that is required," remarked Westonbridge, rudely.

"The reason why *I* ought to win," retorted Tann, viciously, "is, applied negatively, the reason why *you* have not won."

The listeners looked at each other in a vain endeavor to arrive at Tann's meaning; so the reply was in reality as effective as a crushing repartee.

"You've never been racing, perhaps?" conjectured Fitz, sneeringly, addressing Sadler A.

"Never!" responded Tann, ashamed at the greenness he was displaying, "at least, not for some hundreds of years. The last race I saw was in the Circus Maximus, at Rome, between six chariots. Picture to



yourselves three hundred thousand people seated on galleries raised one above another! Excitement! Well, I should smile! The then Consul, Quintus Fluvius, broke a bloodvessel as his entry was just beaten by the Emperor's. That was in the time of Domitian."

There was a pause and Sadler trembled at the blunder he had made; but he soon discovered it was a groundless fear. His recital had been received as the statement of one desirous of posing as a champion liar.

Franklin here joined the circle, and was met by a reproachful glance from Violet, which, though he did not show it, made him savage with himself for the pettiness of behavior he had shown.

The company had begun to thin down, and Fitz George, Spongee and Westonbridge were now taking their departure. Franklin and Tann prepared to follow them; but Mrs. Fanfield begged them to come back to dinner. An imploring look from Violet removed whatever indecision might have been shown; although Franklin made a pleasing condition to his surrender, namely, that the two ladies were to accept his and Tann's escort to the theatre afterwards.

About, seven Tann and his victim drove up in a cab to Arlingford Mansions, and were ushered into the drawing-room to await the arrival of their hostess. Elliott thought he saw in everything around him tokens of Violet's excellent taste in color and bric-a-brac. He didn't know that the furnishing had been done on contract, before she had set eyes on the house. In his usual easy fashion he roamed about the apartment and glanced at the pictures; amongst them was a beautiful painting of Miss Woods. Before this he lingered for a considerable period, Sadler noticing his abstraction with evident satisfaction.

Violet came in quietly, and stood close by Franklin, waiting for him to recover from his reverie. But not till a soft hand was placed on his shoulder did he wheel sharply round and see her. What a look it was that greeted him! There was a new light in her



eyes which was strangely overpowering. It was undeniably favorable in interpretation; and yet, despite the thrill it gave him, he could not quite bring himself to like it. But her bewitching smile dispelled his doubts. "How did he like her picture?"

He answered that it was really lovely until the original stood beside it, and then the picture left off in beauty where the original began.

The sounding of a gong told them that dinner was ready, and Mrs. Fanfield entered, to be escorted to the dining-room by Sadler, who was forcibly reminded of the Martha credited to him in the play.

Violet entrusted herself to Franklin's care, and complaining of a slight dizziness, fairly clung to him as they followed the others.

Franklin Elliott was again at fault. In the old days Violet would have suffered far more without giving a sign, her maidenly reserve, which quality he had loved above all others, was so strong; yet here she was encouraging him with tender glances and confiding actions.

The next minute he reproached himself for his absurd fancies; he ascribed it all to his foolish vanity.

Why should he imagine Violet cared for him more than—say Tann, or or Fitz George—but she *did*! There could be no doubt about it; she never smiled at others as she did at him. Why try to fathom the depths of a woman's nature? She was sweetness itself; her eyes, as they rested upon him, deepened into the most liquid blackness, and the imperturbable one was forced to avert his glance for the first time in his life.

During dinner the conversation was at uniform high-tide. Mrs. Fanfield was radiant and ponderously vivacious. Tann laughed and talked on every imaginable topic, and the other two (it was quite *en famille*, this dinner) conversed without saying a word. They lingered a sufficient time over the meal to be late for the theatre; a proceeding which goes a considerable way to proving a title to fashionableness.



It was nearly half-past eight when they entered their private box. It doesn't matter whom or what they went to see, for the persons we are interested in never noticed the performance.

Tann sat down in front, and dazzled the house with the lustre and fire of his diamonds, just like a minstrel performer; and Martha Fanfield, by his side, fanned her massive proportions with obtrusive languor. Violet and Franklin remained at the back in earnest conversation, which bordered on and off the language of love every minute.

Had she ever received his letters?

Violet expressed surprise to hear that he had not forgotten her.

Could he ever forget her?

She had been away part of the time and the servants had forgotten to forward the letters; she could almost cry at the thought of the pleasure she had lost.

"Would it have been a pleasure to have heard from me?" We revert to the proper, direct conversational form.

Violet answered this in simple utterance of his name. "Franklin!" There was a reproachful dignity in the tone, which the subsequent timid apology for the liberty served to heighten.

"Why shouldn't you call me Franklin, and I call you Violet?" said Elliott, taking her hand (accidentally of course) and holding it fast in his.

"Franklin sounds like a surname, almost, doesn't it?" sighed Miss Woods, making a weak attempt to draw her hand from his grasp; but Elliott held it tighter, as a thrill of passion went through his heart. He drew his chair closer, and leaning towards her tried to look into her now downcast face.

"Violet, dear," he said, "ever since I first met you—I—"

He hesitated, this cool, usually unruffled young man! Violet raised her head partly, and gave him such a glance that he was about to dispense with



words and put his arm about her—Tann and Mrs. Fanfield were earnestly engrossed in front—when there came a knock at the door.

“Come in,” said Franklin, almost angrily; and Colonel Fitz George put his cynical head in.

“Saw you from down below—rather, saw Mrs. Fanfield, and guessed you were here, Miss Woods. How do you do?” And shaking hands with Violet, Fitz George, with sublime impudence—too sublime to be classed as rudeness—dropped into the fifth chair with which the box was provided.

“Deuced slow, isn’t it?” asked the colonel.

“I can’t say I’ve noticed it!” answered Violet.

“No?” said the colonel, with a half sneer. “To my mind it’s utterly untrue to nature. Here’s a fellow in the first act simply mad about a girl—loves her to distraction, and all that sort of thing, wants to marry her—as far gone as that. Then he discovers that she’s not as good as she might be—and, in fact that she doesn’t care about being tied down in the marriage tether. What does the idiot do? Instead of taking her at her word and the hints she has given him, he really breaks his heart to find his idol shattered, and his love turns to contemptuous pity.”

We do the colonel justice to say that Miss Woods had withdrawn to the front of the box. “What do you think of such a fellow?” questions Fitz George.

“I think,” answered Franklin, “he was a great deal better fellow than either you or I would be likely to be.”

“You think so? I call him a confounded ass. What are women? Pah! we read of pure women, whose spotless natures elevate man to a higher level of affection—and the rest. I wouldn’t wager a crown on the honesty of any woman of my acquaintance.”

“You are not fortunate in your acquaintance,” retorted Elliott; “or else it is possible a knowledge of you is not conducive to virtuous progress.”

“You flatter me!” sneered Fitz George. “I’m not



so fascinating as to have every woman at my feet." Here he half looked at Miss Woods. "But I don't believe in them any the more; it's only a question of the right man coming along."

"These noble sentiments of yours must make you an eagerly sought guest at family reunions and mothers' meetings!" suggested Elliott, sarcastically.

"You mean that negatively, but you're nearer the truth than you reckoned upon. I am generally known as that 'wicked Colonel Fitz George' and wicked Fitz George is looked upon as a necessity. No expedition is complete without him; no picnic can be really satisfactory without his cynical remarks and covert sneers. Bless you, man! I'm thoroughly conversant with myself; and I am somewhat proud of being an unblushing, broad-daylight scoundrel."

"I see! You are lost to all sense of shame; hypocrisy which has shame for a motor is not such a bad vice after all."

"Think not? Are you one of that brand?"

"Whatever mistakes I may make I endeavor to conceal, in order to save my friends from blushing for me."

"How considerate! I'm just the opposite. I love to shock people's sensibilities; the worse they think me, the better I like it!"

"You're a man after Tann's own heart. He would like to cultivate your acquaintance."

"How is it you make a friend of a fellow whose qualities you profess to dislike?"

"We have to tolerate all manner of undesirable people in this world."

Colonel Fitz George smiled sardonically, and moved to the front of the box, with a jest to the ladies that "a true soldier always aimed to be at the front." He seated himself in such a position as to interpose between Violet and Franklin, rendering optical telegraphy impossible.

Elliott thereupon began musing as before; and he carried on a very energetic debate within himself on



the subject started by Fitz George. He divided on the question, with the result of a large majority in favor of ideal woman. His eyes rested on Violet's form as he settled the question; and then he deliberated what alteration it was which had come over her. He had a half fear that he had betrayed himself too readily; but so far he had not advanced beyond retractability. He would wait and watch a little longer.

Meantime Fitz George was indulging in a desperate flirtation with Miss Woods, and it appeared that it was not one-sided. It was quite a while before Franklin became cognizant of their by-play, and when he did he first heaved an inaudible sigh, which confessed that the idol had feet of clay after all, and, then became insanely jealous. It was a new experience to him; but if Violet were embarking on a coquette's career with the intention of rousing his anger, she gained no gratification whatever, for the countenance of our young friend was immovably careless—not stolid with assumed indifference. That axiom about “as good fish in the sea,” never works with lovers, for the reason that no lover believes it.

Franklin, however, felt keenly. We take the reader into confidence as to his feelings, because, as has so often been mentioned, his face was as unreadable as an Egyptian papyrus to the ordinary American. But because a man does not show pain, it does not follow that he is free from suffering. So please don't accuse us of dropping the character; we are simply revealing secrets we have no right to.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Elliott was heartily glad when the play was over; but even then that military Mephisto would not retire gracefully. He must see Miss Woods to her brougham, and he had his way. The ladies snugly seated in the darkness of the carriage, the gentlemen said good-night; but Franklin managed to be the last. He put his head in at the open window, and she was so close that he kissed her



very lightly, but, with what I believe is called *impressment*. Perhaps she overlooked it; anyhow she said,

"To-morrow at three?"

"Home!" rudely ordered Fitz George to the coachman, and Franklin, to save his head, was obliged to retire with the question unanswered.

"Why did you do that?" demanded Franklin, calmly; "couldn't you see I was talking?"

"All's fair in love and war!" said the equally imperturbable colonel, lighting a cigar.

"Who said anything about love?" asked Franklin.

"I did," answered Fitz George. "War may follow."

"Is the circle in which you move as uniformly rude as you are?" interposed Tann, annoyed for Elliott.

"Yes," answered Fitz George; "rudeness to inferiors, in fact, to everybody, is quite good form in society."

"Well!" said Franklin, "if you imagine you are talking to an inferior now, don't stand in your own light. Be as rude as you like; I only ask one concession in return for my permission."

"And what's that?" asked the colonel, with a supercilious curl of the lip and a puff of smoke.

"The right to be rude in return," answered Franklin. "We Americans are, by your ignorant countrymen, credited with frequent use of the six-shooter, but we suit our weapons to our opponent."

"Oh!" from the colonel.

"Yes: we shoot dogs and men; we kick curs. Good evening!"

"Won't you come and have supper at the club with me?" asked the colonel. "I like you; you're just the man for my money. I'm generally considered cool; but you're a regular Arctic Circle."

"No, thank you!" answered Franklin to this question; "I'm a little weary. Tann will join you."

And Tann did. The two hailed a hansom and rattled off to the west, while Elliott walked in silent meditation to his hotel.



## CHAPTER XIX.

IN WHICH THE TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTHONY IS REVIVED  
FOR OUR HERO'S BENEFIT.

AFTER luncheon on the following day, Franklin assumed his most nonchalant air and announced his intention of taking a stroll. Sadler generously offered his company, but expressed no surprise at its non-acceptance, and Elliott went out alone. With remarkable precision for a man who is merely out for a stroll, he wended his way towards the Arlington Mansions, and was ushered into the reception-room to await Violet's arrival.

He sat in the half-light of the apartment for several seconds, when the *frou-frou* (word beloved of lady novelists) of skirts was audible along the passage, and she came into the room. She was loosely clad in an elegant *robe de chambre*, a combination of ribbons and cloudy lace, which, were we a lady, we might dilate upon.

"You really must excuse my appearance," she said, in hurried confusion; "but I was not certain you heard me say you might call, and Mrs. Fanfield is out for the afternoon, I think."

Violet seated herself in a low chair. Elliott did likewise. Both were silent, as though their hearts were too full for words.

Franklin was the first to speak.

"I came to see you, not Mrs. Fanfield," he said, gazing at her till the brown eyes which had been raised to his drooped.

His heart was beating at a painful rate and with almost audible force. Here was Violet, more like the Violet of old; more retiring and more modestly reserved than she had recently appeared to his critical judgment. Here was the faint blush, lighting up the



pale delicate face into indescribable beauty; suffusing her countenance with a loving tenderness, all purity. She dropped her eyelids as he spoke, and the dark lashes swept in a tantalizing curl, before she again lifted her glance to meet his. Ah! what a glance! How her eyes glistened and glowed as the pupils enlarged with insuppressible love! How they swam in mist of affection, and shone with the reflected brilliancy of a great passion! Her bosom rose and fell fast with the short breaths of emotion, and the dimpled arm resting on the table quivered.

Her heart was too overflowing to be checked, and her whole being betrayed that she was shaken in every fibre.

What discretion ever triumphed over such temptation? Her beauty seemed heightened, magnified, glorified, until she was as if transfigured. Never before was so glorious a vision revealed to mortal man!

Oh, Sadler, you're not such a fool after all!

Franklin bent down and kissed her hand, and finding no reproof, threw himself on his knees before her and put his arm around her waist, while the words flowed fast to his lips in torrents of eloquence.

"Violet, dear," he said, "when I first saw you, calm and beautiful in the hour of peril, I loved you. In your grief and desolation my heart went out to you. Ever since I have known you the sentiment within me has grown and gathered force like a surging breaker, and now the wave has fallen on the shore. Violet, I love you!"

He drew her closer still, and she hid her face on his shoulder.

"Violet! need I ask?—no! You love me, dearest, or you would not trust yourself to me so implicitly."

Then she rose and stood beside him in the encircling of his right arm, and her head rested against his shoulder. He kissed her upturned face again and again, and the love-light in her eyes deepened and glowed with ever increasing fervor. He experienced



a magnetism which he struggled against, but the eyes drew him on; he was well-nigh powerless. He reeled and was compelled to rest on the settee. Violet knelt by his side and leaned her face on his knee, holding his hand all the while. The warmth of her grasp caused his nerves to tingle but with a powerful effort he recovered himself and spoke again.

"Violet, your intelligence must have told you that I have long been contending against my love. You were rich and I poor, your wealth was an obstacle to me."

She pressed his hand and kissed it. He continued:

"To render myself superior to such suspicion, I have devoted myself to money-making, and thanks to a friend's good advice, I have succeeded. I am now rich and can avow I love you for yourself alone."

"Dear Franklin!" was Violet's answer to this, and she turned her lips to his to receive his kiss.

In love, silence is more eloquent than speech; neither wished to speak. They sat with their arms around each other; hers round his neck and her warm cheek close to his. He could almost feel her heart beat against his side as she clung to him. She sighed contentedly. The clock gave warning of the flight of time, and Franklin gently rose and put her from him.

"There is only one thing now," he said; but she interrupted him.

"Don't go, Franklin. Mrs. Fanfield will not be back before six. We have all the time to ourselves; let us be happy as we were."

"Tann is looking for me, I suppose," said Franklin, unwilling to leave, all the same.

"He must do without you, Franklin. Sit with me longer, I cannot let you go so soon." She laid her hand on his arm and he dropped upon the sofa by her side.

"What were you saying, dearest, when I interrupted?" and as she spoke, she pillowed her head on his heart again.



He whispered his question into her ear, paving the way with a kiss.

"How long must I wait before I can call you mine?"

"Am I not yours?" with a dilating of her lovely eyes in astonishment.

"Of course, Violet; but not all in all. When will you become my wife?"

Violet clung closer, as if afraid to lose him. "Impossible!" she almost gasped.

"Impossible! Why?"

"It is too late! I am already married."

"Married! already married!" he echoed, wildly, "and you allowed me to live in ignorance these past days! You allowed me to revive the memories of my early love; aye, sought to, knowing that you could never be honestly taken to my heart!"

"Franklin, forgive me! I loved you then as now. They deceived me."

"They! who are they?" he demanded, sternly.

"They—your friends."

"Belle and Jack Harper?"

"Yes."

"Jack Harper! The double-faced villain! What could have been his motive? Not that he—"

"Yes, he is my husband. I married him in despair at your cruel silence. I was deluded; I learned you loved me still and I am here."

"Where is he? Why have you left him?"

"Franklin, can you ask? Is he to blast our lives? I have left him for you; for you I forget the esteem of friends and barter the world's opinion in exchange for love." She flung her arms around his neck.

Franklin was livid with astonishment; he attempted to speak, but she prettily placed a hand over his mouth and stayed his speech. Then came the inward tempter. Why not? His friend's wife! But why be tethered in an irksome bond, when this fairest of creatures who rested against his heart, herself repudiated the bondage? His love, his real love was slain,



and his true, manly heart was bruised. Yes; but she would not let him think of that. No remonstrance could he utter; she kissed the reproaches from his lips, and held him in the encircling of her warm white arms. Passion battled against the sorrow of his ideal slain, and the memory of what he had deemed her faded into indistinctness before the glamour cast over him by her present fascination. Still he remained steeled against her, till in a fit of rage she pushed him from her and burst into tears. Oh, crowning artifice of woman! He needs must, poor fool! console her; he needs must kiss the tears away from her eyes and put his arms around the supple form. He knelt beside her, soothing her and endeavoring to call back the smiles to her face, and he succeeded. She lifted her eyes to his, and though her lashes were bedewed with tears, gave him a tender glance. His head swam and his arms closed around her yet tighter; she was conquering—as Cleopatra might have done. Her breath fanned his face, and the great simoon of passion passed through his soul, parching and blasting the remnants of self-respect with his belief in the existence of ideal woman. Sharp and agonizing was the struggle, and the woman knew the victory at hand.

He set his teeth in the last effort; but, with a sigh his heart seemed to burst—he was surrendering himself, when—

The pole stretched across the embrasure of a bay-window, a heavy brass pole, hung with thick tapestry, came down with a crash to the floor, and the curtains were piled high above a form beneath!

Elliott rushed toward the intruder, while Miss Woods ground her teeth with anger. Franklin lifted the tapestry and nothing was beneath! Close by, on the floor, was a hat he knew only too well; it was Tann's. He gazed at this damning evidence of the infernal presence, and a light seemed to break in upon him; the thoughts, the inferences of that diabolical











supervision, chased each other in quick succession through his brain. A soft arm was thrown around him, but now he was superior to such influences. A low voice whispered words of endearment in his ear, but he was deaf. He struggled to be free, and still she persisted; until in his rage he hurled her from him. But with an impulse to save her from falling he clutched quickly at her dress, and the loose robes, tearing at the throat, came away, exposing the smooth, unblemished shoulder.

Without stopping to collect himself, without prior deliberation, his eyes sought the scar from the cruel wound inflicted at the fire, which should have marred the whiteness of the skin. It was not there!

As she lay prostrate at his feet, a horrid change came over her. As if the workings of his mind were clear to her understanding, a look of baffled viciousness overspread the beautiful features—a transformation quicker than any words can describe.

The hair thrown back, revealed a forehead wrinkled into black lines of passion; the eyes blazed like hot coals, and protruded with the impulse of hatred from the sockets; the teeth were set and gleamed malignantly from the parted, livid lips; the throat swelled and the tendons stood out like cords from the neck. The metamorphosis was horrifying. There blazed forth the corrupted soul, aflame with the glare of overwhelming passions and sins.

Franklin's temper always sank to the depths of frigidity in the proportion as his opponent raged into fervency of anger; so he smiled, and said,

“Good afternoon! Remember me kindly to Mrs. Fanfield.” And he bowed himself out with almost exaggerated politeness.

Two days afterward, one of the Arlington Mansions was “To Let.”



## CHAPTER XX.

### IN WHICH SADLER A. TAKES LEAVE OF THIS MORTAL SPHERE.

How our poor devil suffered! He had played as intricate a game of chess as was possible; had gone almost through to the end without flaw or mistake; had given mate with his queen and the next move would have been check—and had irretrievably ruined all by upsetting the board and scattering his pieces. There was no retrieving; no reopening of the game. Franklin would not again risk defeat. Sadler had never ceased gnashing his teeth in impotent rage since the curtain pole had struck him and razed him to the ground beneath a pile of curtains.

“I’m a fool,” he told himself over and over again; “fool!” He cried. Can devils cry? They can; the tears trickled down his sallow face and he sobbed with vexation, knowing what he had lost.

Nothing but the fear of making a scene had restrained him from tearing his hair and rending his tweed suit in the street. Now he was in a room out of public gaze; and he raved and stamped, and hurled himself from wall to wall, from chair to floor, from table to ceiling, with an evident desire to take it out of something. All Franklin’s efforts at soothing him were fruitless. He blanked himself to every stage of perdition, from the topmost pit to the uttermost depths, and deeper still. He called down new and indescribable tortures upon his own close-cropped head, and, at last, his corporeal presence, bruised and battered in every square inch, fell exhausted from the ceiling to the bed. On that feathery resting-place he wept like a child, with a consummate abandon, and that sharp catching of the



breath and the bursting of sobs from a pent-up heart, indicative of a grief which cannot be controlled.

Franklin saved one chair from his wrecking endeavors, and in it he watched Tann's performance of unparalleled acrobatic feats. When Sadler, worn and spent, grieved in comparative quietude on the bed, Franklin addressed him:

"I can understand your feelings in the matter, Tann. I had no idea you possessed so many resources. It was a great stroke of genius, finding this beautiful paste imitation of the real diamond. I was almost deceived."

"You were, quite!" howled Tann, in piteous accents, and he started on himself again. He propelled himself into mid-air and dropped with his full weight upon the chandelier, where he remained hanging and uttering blood-curdling imprecations.

When he was again calm, Elliott requested him to make a clean breast of everything; and Tann, knowing further deception to be fruitless, began his confession with an attack on his friend.

"You are more trouble than you are worth. Ever since I set foot on terra firma, I have been working away at you with every artifice, with every ounce of strength at my disposal, and with what effect? None! The worst of it is, you're not an ascetic or anchorite, or one of those fellows who achieve future happiness by present misery. No! you are having a pretty good time on earth, and since I've been with you, you have increased your chances for a like good time in the hereafter. You enjoy life; you smoke the best cigars in the market; you drink in satisfactory moderation; you play cards and go to the races; you attend theatres, concerts, hops, conversaciones and every abode of amusement; and, although you don't show it, you're happy. I know you are. To every assault of mine, to every hint on the advisability of going it, to racket and the like, you return



me an argument which has by this time grown stale and tedious to my ears."

"But none the less convincing," put in Franklin.

"You meet me at every turn with the annoying taunt that, although I'm the bane, I'm the antidote as well. You tell me that mine is the hand that bridges the pitfalls which engulf others, and that my angelic face is ever present to keep you from going astray. It would appear that I came to earth, a devil, and I've been doing the work of an angel."

"Good old Sadler!" said the other sympathetically.

"I'm too used to your sarcasm now to feel it. Oh! I'm sick of the whole business. I'm sick of pretending to be an American and of assuming a dialect which I'm not in the habit of wearing. I'm weary of saying 'I guess' and 'you bet your sweet life,' for the purpose of deceiving outsiders as to my nationality; and I'm dead tired of man's superior wickedness, and I want to go back to hell."

"Best place for you," commented Elliott.

"My terrestrial sojourn has been marked by a long series of mistakes and disasters. I've been burned, and drowned, and garotted, and kicked, and ill-used in every conceivable way by man or men. I attempted to apply the methods of the fifteenth century to the nineteenth and I've made a fizzle of it."

"That's so!" agreed Franklin. "It pains me to have to coincide with you, but it is."

Sadler pressed his aching brow convulsively and fought hard against the childish sobs of avowed failure, while the pendulum of the clock on the mantel oscillated from one side to the other exactly six times. At last he looked up, and said, with evident shame crimsoning his saffron-hued visage,

"Now for my confession!"

Franklin metaphorically pricked up his ears, as Tann, with the blush of conscious guilt, declared his violation of the rules of etiquette and chivalry.



"Franklin, you may smile derisively, when I say that I, the arch-devil, am ashamed of myself. Scores of your fellow-men ignore their offences until they are revealed to public obloquy: but I have suffered remorse from the very beginning of my course of dishonor. I always strove to be a gentleman, and the necessity of swerving from the course consistent with gentlemanly behavior hurt me; it did indeed! And, Franklin, it was out of love for you. It was, so help me! I wished to grapple you to me with hooks of steel."

"All right," interrupted Elliott, "get on! Get on!"

Sadler sighed, and commenced his confession in real earnest.

"You wrote to Miss Violet Woods, care of Mr. Peter G. Woods, Fifth Avenue, New York, U. S.; did you not?"

"About six letters, I think," said Franklin.

"Not one of them ever reached its destination."

Elliott was silent, waiting for the self-accusation.

"I," stated S. A., "abstracted them from the letter boxes in which they were posted."

"You infernal scoundrel!" muttered Elliott between his teeth.

"Again you received several letters from her, and from her friends with regard to her."

"Never!" said Franklin, with a touch of excitement.

"I mean to say that letters came for you, which you never received. I invariably purloined them from the office."

This last item overpowered Franklin. "And did you dare read them?"

"Every one!"

Sadler bowed his head, and stood before him the picture of dejection and shamefacedness. He evidently expected to be felled to the floor, but though the hand was raised, the blow never came.

Franklin calmed himself, and curtly ordered his companion to, "Go on."



"I despise my actions as much as ever you can. I feel I am no longer fit company for a gentleman. I admit all this because my mind is in a state of frenzy, which leads me to avow that I don't care a continental whether you go to heaven or hades. If anything, I prefer you to be out of my establishment; it wouldn't be comfortable with the two of us. You'd have the place reformed in about a week, and would demonstrate, by pro and con, that it was just as easy for a devil to jog along in a condition of virtuous mediocrity, as to tempt others to a misery which does not alleviate his personal suffering."

"You bet your life I would!"

"That's where our contract is unsatisfactory. If I import you free of duty, and you are not a sinner in an aggravated sense, you would have an influence in Pandemonium which I should be powerless to counteract. Then, again, there is a coolness, a something in you which commands respect and compels affection. I love you. I do, Franklin."

The poor devil cried with emotion. "And if you could have come to us sodden with crime and blackened to a degree with guilt, all would have been well; but I couldn't work even the first step of your downfall. I thought my last plan a beauty, and it was! Once get a man into the power of a bad woman and every crime is feasible. Embezzlement, and even murder are then easy of accomplishment; and when I think of the glorious creature I employed! Oh, I'm mad with myself. I've failed, and it's my own fault!"

"Who is this woman?" asked Elliott, sternly.

"She was originally the Witch of Endor. We kept her specially for that line of temptation," answered Tann. "To-morrow London will be ringing with stories of her disappearance; maybe the river will be dragged. Mrs. Fanfield, who is mortal, will be ignorant of her whereabouts. A nine days' wonder! and then—another incident consigned to oblivion."

This last statement restored happiness to Franklin's



mind and re-established his ideal on a firmer foundation than before. No more doubts as to her worthiness now; many, however, of her willingness.

"Well!" said Tann, with a sigh, drawing a paper from his pocket, "here is the contract. I give it back to you and thus renounce all legal claims to your soul."

"Keep it," said Elliott, "I don't want it."

"You'd better take it. We've finished with each other; the bargain's off."

"All right! But I don't care about the document, although your autograph has a certain value."

"But I might wish to hold you to it."

"I should refuse to be held by such an agreement; it is not worth the paper it's written on."

"What!!!!?"

"If you went into a court of law, and in bodily presence declared yourself to be the devil, any modern jury of average intelligence would consider you insane. Besides, the document isn't drawn up in any kind of legal form; and, in short, you haven't a leg to stand on."

"What?"

"Not a leg!"

"Do you wish me to understand that you drew up this agreement, knowing all the time that you did not intend to abide by it?"

"You have expressed my views admirably," said Franklin, coolly.

"And you have the face to tell me this—me, Sadler A. Tann?"

"Certainly."

"*Tu quoque, Brute*," quoted Tann, sadly. "Verily have I lost all faith in goodness and veracity. I believed in you, Franklin, and you have deceived me." And Sadler wept.

"Nonsense, old man," laughed Elliott; "I'll explain. To start with, in business matters, the whole aim is to get the best of a contract or agreement.



I've done it. Then again you have acted neither up to the spirit nor the letter of your side of it; you have been putting up jobs on me in utter variance with my desires; that, in itself, constituted grounds for a dissolution of partnership. Another consideration which should soften the blow, is that you've gained a quantity of useful experience. If you ever return to earth—"

"Never again," interposed S. A. Tann, emphatically.

"You'll know the ropes better," concluded Franklin, not heeding the interruption.

"You are a shuffler. You are worse than Faust."

"Undoubtedly, with the exception that I haven't the ruin of an innocent girl to lay to my charge, nor the delicious consciousness of a murder. I don't like to rub salt into your wounds, Tann, but I'm not sampling the '*facilis descensus*' just at present. Oh, you've been beautifully fooled!"

"No wonder! One of our immigrants told me never to do business with a Yankee. Why didn't I take his advice? He said they'd swindle the very devil; and they've done it. I might have known it."

Franklin smiled at this tribute to his business capacities.

"Before leaving," said Sadler, in conclusion, "I want to ask you how you are going to live."

"In style," replied Franklin.

"You have no money."

"Comparatively none! A trifle of half a million dollars, that's all."

"But it is accursed, it is hell-money; the price of a soul which has obtained the coin under false pretences."

"Pardon me, it is the result of honest speculation, inspired by Sadler A. Tann."

"Damnation!" muttered the demon.

"Not for me!"

"It's all over then?" asked Tann.



"Completely."

"Good by, Franklin!"

"Good-by, Tann. I shall always remember you as one of the bright spots of my existence, believe me. I am slow to forget a friend; although I never let friendship interfere with business."

"Quite right! Good-by—one moment, Franklin, I have a favor to ask you. Don't give me away to the 'boys.' Don't let them know what a fool I've been."

"Tann, when I tell you that a book embodying our experiences would be regarded in the light of a fairy-tale, your apprehensions must vanish. The 'boys' will not deride you."

"You refuse my last request?"

"I won't commit myself one way or another."

"Then the book shall be a rank failure. The critics shall tear it into infinitesimal rags, and the public shall refuse to buy it."

"Very well!"

"Good-by, then, forever and aye! If in the dim eternity our ways lie together, which Heaven forbid—"

"Good-by, Tann, not *au revoir*!"

They shook hands, and Sadler, in the angry mortification of discomfiture, left the marks of his fingers, burnt into Franklin's hand. These marks are noticeable only when one knows of their existence.

Tann gave his faithless friend one last lingering look, as though to indelibly fix his image on his (Tann's) immortal memory; the modern clothes fell from him, and he stood there in his old Mephistophelean costume.

Then, like an image thrown upon the wall from a magic lantern, drawing farther and farther away, he grew larger and larger, dimmer and dimmer and finally faded into a vague shapeless fire-tinted mist, which cleared away imperceptibly, till nothing more was discernible.

This occurred between the hours of five and six on



Wednesday afternoon, October 18, 188—, Tann having sojourned with Franklin Elliott from the 13th of April of the same year.

What remains to be told can be disposed of very briefly, and shall be. Were it not that we have already indulged in one or more offers of marriage, we would with pleasure inform the reader how Franklin behaved on a similar occasion; how he drew her head on his shoulder and kissed her sweet lips, thinking the while of the "other" who had, unsolicited, subjected him to the same treatment. Ah!—Oh! But we mustn't.

Dear peruser, do you know Franklin Elliott? Look out for the imprint of the Satanic fingers, and when you have found it, you have our hero. Look out for the wife—the woman who has not even one detractor, and it's quite possible Mrs. Elliott will reward your search.

We were once in love with her ourselves, but Franklin—well, perhaps the only girl we ever loved would not like us to say how long that "once" endured.

Anybody else who may at a future date write a story anent Satan visiting earth, will be foisting an unwarrantable falsehood on the public, for Sadler assured Franklin, with his own lips, that he would never again run chances of being duped by a mortal, and that of all brands of nationality, 'No American need apply.'

They—Mr. and Mrs. Elliott—own a beautiful brown-stone residence on the upper part of Fifth Avenue; and, in addition, possess a villa on the Hudson, to say nothing of other occasional tenures, and a family of three, the eldest of the two being named after us—or, as we're at the end—me, Jack Harper.

In the spacious vestibule of the Fifth Avenue mansion is a large painting; a life size portrait from memory, of Elliott's only immortal friend, Sadler A. Tann.













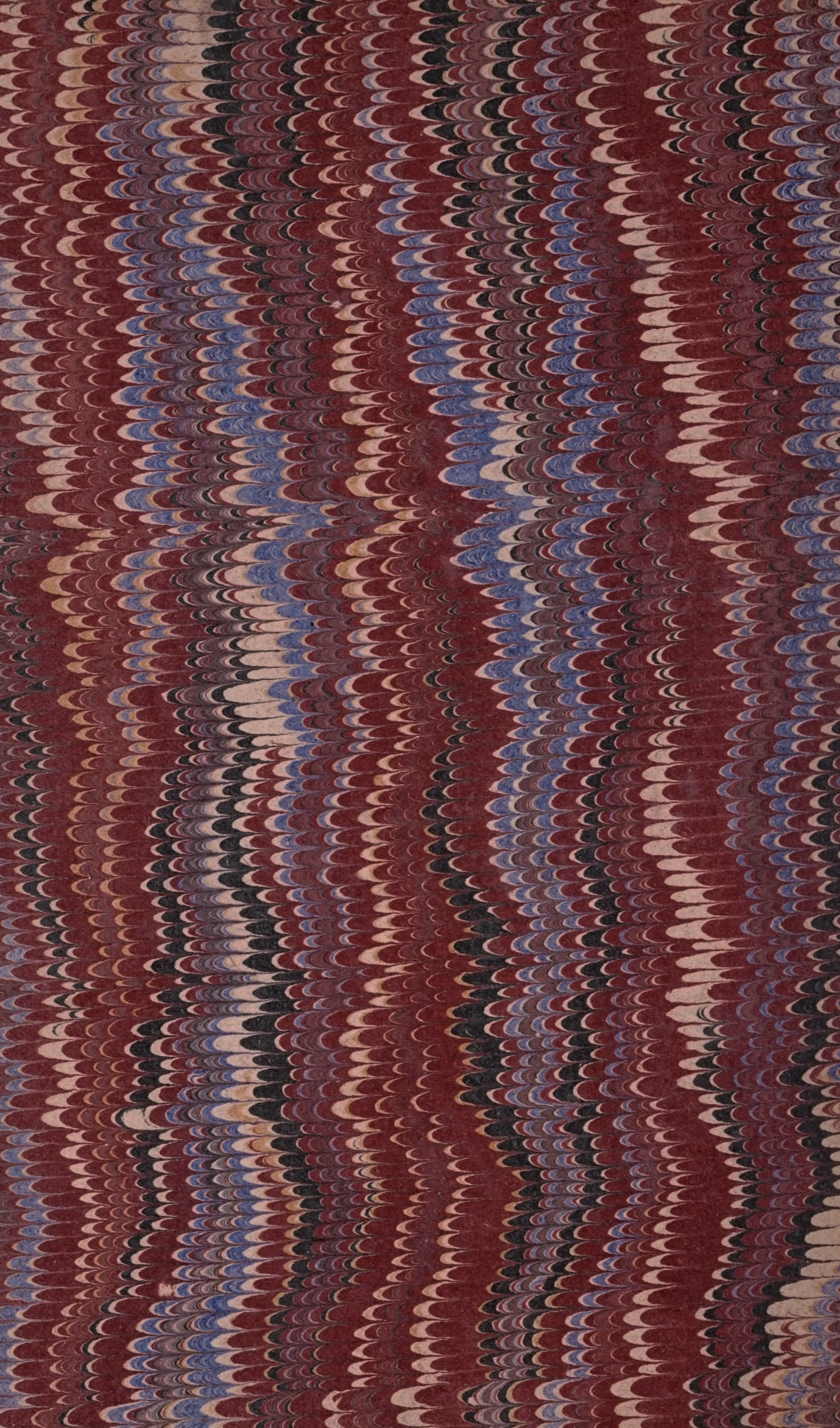




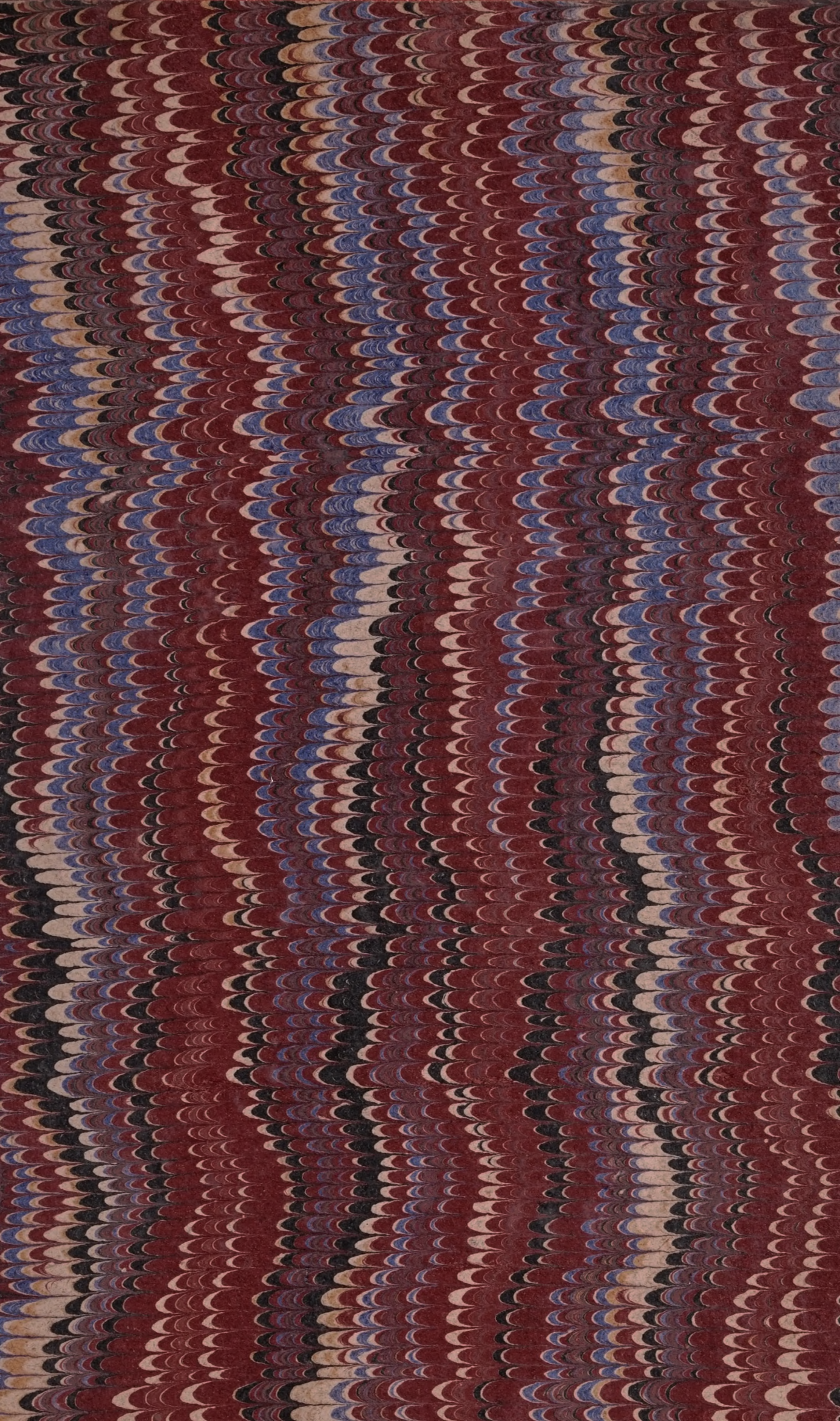














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